THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

ANY attempt to expound the meaning of grace leads directly to the consideration of what is the reality involved in religion. Grace, as the word for the Divine way of dealing with men, implies the conception of God as personal, and of His activity as the bringing to bear on men as persons the fullest influence of His Divine personality that they can receive. Grace means the total outpouring of His redeeming love and power. The expression of personality cannot be divided into separate channels or compartments ; the whole of a personality is behind every manifestation of it. So one may say that everything God has to say or give or do is included in Jesus Christ. Or one may say that the sum of all His operation is the gift of the Holy Spirit. If we use for a short, rich description of the saving work of God this word grace, the reality for which it stands is the same, merely, that in religion there is an ' I ' and ' Thou ' relation in which God meets men on the level of personality to show them His face and to win their hearts.

Dr. Henry David GRAY has written *The Christian Doctrine of Grace* [1] with the aim of showing that the clear understanding and faithful insistence that this is the Christian meaning of grace cuts out the mystifications and quasi-materializing, the subtle distinctions and definitions that have complicated and burdened theology and obstructed the soul's apprehension of reality.

After noting that some belief in available help from a benevolent Power is behind all religion, he briefly touches on the gospel evidence of Jesus Christ as the revelation of the personality of a gracious God, and Jesus' emphasis on God's yearning for man's salvation. Paul uses the word grace when he thinks of the nature of God that is revealed in Jesus Christ. This grace, however, is not only perceived but experienced as a renewing power and can therefore be spoken of as a gift of God, as power, as the Spirit. It becomes a word not only for the Divine disposition and energy but for the relation to God in which men live. Grace is thus a word whose meaning can be approached from various angles. The next chapters in this book trace the way in which, in the course of theological controversy and the formulation of doctrine, grace came to be treated, not as a word for the total energy of God in redemption, but for a special component in it, something that could be considered in abstraction from other elements in the situation, something that had a mystic existence of its own, something impersonal that could be conveyed in some way analogous to food or medicine, in portions suitable in quality or quantity to particular circumstances. And the Church and particularly the sacraments were regarded as vehicles for the communications of this supernatural force.

Dr. GRAY points out that even Luther, especially in connexion with the sacraments, did not entirely abandon the conception of grace as a special gift; and that in Calvin the emphasis on the sovereignty of God made grace formally at least simply an overwhelming Divine force; and he names Schleiermacher as the first to reach a secure hold on the fact that the one reality in religion is the personal relation between God and man. Following him the Ritschlians understood grace as personal fellowship. The firmest grasp, however, of the truth that personality in God and man is the key to what grace means and does, and the most incisive use of this principle as the criterion of doctrine and practice, is found in Oman's great book ' Grace and Personality,' a book which makes a landmark in theology.

As the writer proceeds his purpose is disclosed as largely controversial and critical of views which still obtain. Roman Catholics remain by the idea of grace as a free gift of a supernatural quality, separate in a way from Giver and recipient. In Protestantism linger theories of redemption as something purchased by Christ for us, and revivalists have notions of grace as a state attained only through experience of a certain pattern of conversion. But there are no exclusive means of grace. All personal fellowship may be its channel. To canalize the communication of grace in the sacraments or in an emotional conversion depersonalizes it and ignores the fact that Scripture,

[1] Independent Press ; 8s. 6d. net.

ritual, preaching, sacraments, prayer, may all draw men into the fellowship of God which is the experience of grace.

The author thus gives us a valuable study which furnishes a critique of eschatological views on rewards and punishments, on the meaning of sin, on the danger of separating Christ's Person and work, or His life from His death. The understanding of grace as a fellowship of love makes personal sincerity essential in penitence and faith. It makes an end of the hair-splitting distinctions and definitions of various kinds of grace, and is the only way to hold together man's religious dependence and moral independence, man's freedom and God's grace.

There are two directions in which Dr. GRAY's emphasis on the fellowship of persons as the reality in religion might furnish guidance to-day. One is in connexion with the 'Faith and Order' Movement for Church unity. If fellowship with God through Jesus Christ is the reality in religion this fellowship which is in the Holy Spirit constitutes the unity of the Church. Every plan for overcoming such divisions as exist must begin by recognizing that this unity is already there, and that the only concern is how to give it better expression.

The other direction is in connexion with the Lord's Supper. Celebrated round the Lord's Table with the real presence in spirit of the Lord at its head as Host the rite is obviously one of the personal fellowship of Christ and His guests. One of the most moving expressions of this truth is in George Herbert's poem 'Love' with its closing lines

> You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat:
> So I did sit and eat.

No doubt it is an acutely controversial matter and one into which Dr. GRAY does not enter. But his book will tend to confirm the feeling of those who hold that the pure rite of the Table best expresses sacramentally the gracious fellowship in which the believer lives and of which he is made supremely conscious as a guest at the Lord's Supper Table, and who regret a widespread modern tendency to follow the model of many ancient rites which interrupt the movement of the Supper to insert a liturgy making at an altar an offering to God.

A volume of essays to mark the 'Centennial' of Eden Theological Seminary has been prepared under the editorship of Elmer J. F. ARNDT, who himself contributes one of the essays, The volume is entitled, *The Heritage of the Reformation.*[1] The subject is appropriately chosen, and that for two reasons. The one has to do with the story of the Seminary, the other with the contemporary situation in the evangelical churches.

The founders of Eden Theological Seminary brought with them the heritage of the Continental Reformation as a whole, being convinced of the fundamental unity of the Lutheran and Reformed traditions; and this conviction has resulted, as we here note, in the cultivation of evangelical Christianity since the foundation of the Seminary on irenical rather than polemical lines.

Again, the heritage of the Continental Reformation is a subject of renewed interest in the evangelical churches to-day, which are earnestly seeking to catch again the spirit of the Reformers (Luther, Zwingli and Calvin alike) and to apply it in evangelical freedom to the tasks and problems now confronting the Christian world.

The writers of those twelve essays do not bear names that are familiar on this side of the Atlantic, with the exception of H. Richard Niebuhr (who writes on Evangelical and Protestant Ethics) and his better-known brother, Reinhold Niebuhr. The latter brings the volume to a close with a characteristic essay, to which we now turn, on 'The Relevance of Reformation Doctrine in our Day.'

Dr. Niebuhr begins, consistently enough, with the tradition he inherited and has endorsed in his preaching and teaching, by finding the most important insight and achievement of the Reformation in the doctrine of justification by faith. He regards this doctrine as marking a pinnacle in the history of Christianity and as vindicating the final or ultimate Scriptural truth that Divine forgiveness is not merely the initial act in God's reconciliation with man but rather the perpetual necessity even of the redeemed. The redeemed is *simul justus et peccator*, and this applies not only to the redeemed individual but also to the redeemed community which is the Christian Church. 'Christ's ironic words—that He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance, and that the sick, rather than those who are whole, need a physician—are meant for every community of men who imagine themselves whole rather than sick, including those who have been made whole by the redemption of Christ.'

[1] Richard R. Smith, New York; $3.00.

Now this spiritual insight of the Reformation is desperately needed for the spiritual health of our generation ; it is here that the spiritual heritage of the Reformation has relevance for us, unbelievable as that may appear. Our world is perishing in a conflict between various idealisms that are so busy establishing their own righteousness that none of them is subjected to the righteousness of God.

The pathetic cultural struggle of our modern time is tri-cornered : Catholicism, secular Liberalism, Communism. The Catholic Church does not appreciate the moral ambiguity of all political positions, including those of Catholic politics, and does not realize that its Christian civilization is *in extremis* not because it is Christian but because it has endorsed the institutions of a decadent feudalism. ' It tries to cast Cardinal Mindzenty in the rôle of a pure Christian martyr but will not admit that Hungarian feudalism was rightly challenged by the Communists and wrongly defended by the Cardinal.'

Secular Liberalism, also embattled against Communism in the triangular conflict, shares the moral ambiguity (the changes are rung on this phrase) of all political positions in believing that the free play of all economic forces would make for social justice. Actually it makes for a concentration of power in a technical society with all the attendant evils. A clear pointer to this fact is the moral ambiguity of atomic energy, potentially useful to society but immediately a great peril. No wonder that the world of the secular idealists is dissolving. ' Clericals and anti-clericals eye each other with suspicion. But both are in darkness about themselves since each knows little or nothing about the sins of the righteous.' Here is the relevance in our day of the doctrine of justification by faith.

Communism, a new political religion, raises its banner of revolt against a secular capitalist-democratic world, as against a Catholic semi-feudal world (with neither of which Dr. Niebuhr would have traffic). But it has corrupted the Christian vision of a Kingdom of God on earth. It fails to recognize, as was most clearly recognized at the Reformation, the taint of sin on all historic achievements. It promises a Kingdom of God without repentance. It vulgarizes the Beatitude on the poor by giving the proletariat the place of a redeemed and redeeming class in society. ' The fury and fanaticism of Communism is falsely ascribed to its atheism or materialism. Actually, the real peril of Communism arises from the consistency of its self-righteousness. It is a universalistic idealism, dreaming of a world community, which has become corrupted by Russian nationalism.'

Dr. Niebuhr leaves little space for his exposition of the bearing of the insights of the Reformation upon the conflict of idealisms which he has described. He has to allow indeed that neither Calvinism nor Lutheranism has properly used those insights. Calvinist, like Catholic, politics has been subject to self-righteousness ; and Lutheranism tends to neutrality in the struggle for social justice.

The religious insight about the sinfulness of all men, whether redeemed or unredeemed—this moral ambiguity in the human situation—must not efface for us the distinction between good and evil, but should teach us that the highest form of goodness, which is forgiving love, is possible only to those who know themselves to be sinners. Thus it is for the Christian Church, which is the guardian of it, to mediate this truth to the world as ' a leaven in a lump.'

Accordingly, from the Reformation standpoint we may challenge the modern world's obsession with its own righteousness to the neglect of the righteousness of God : the religious sanctification of the feudal order in which Catholicism is involved in Hungary and other Eastern European states ; the bourgeois desire for freedom, not religious but political and moral, in which secular Liberalism is—not disinterestedly—involved ; the false universalism of Communism with its nationalistic corruptions at the heart of it.

' The ultimate truth of the Gospel, as discerned at the Reformation, does not contain a simple politico-moral possibility upon which civilizations are constructed. Nor is it a principle of criticism which indiscriminately negates all historic achievements. It is, however, the disclosure of a dimension of life which can prevent the decay and help the renewal of civilizations and which may mitigate the fury of competitive forms of righteousness.'

The Evidence for the Belief that our Lord Himself Claimed to be Divine.

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It has been a favourite contention of the so-called liberal theology that Jesus Himself never claimed to be Divine.[1] We shall try to show that such a contention is false, and that there is strong and conclusive evidence that Jesus did claim to be Divine.

For this purpose we shall not rely on the testimony of the Fourth Gospel, although we shall occasionally use it as corroborative evidence. We believe, indeed, that the Fourth Gospel in its teaching about Christ gives a correct interpretation of the tradition behind the Synoptics. But we have to admit that the Fourth Gospel does present us with a later interpretation rather than an account of the exact words which Jesus uttered. Indeed, at times, it is impossible to say where the supposed discourses of our Lord end and the author's own interpretation begins. No doubt many genuine and authentic utterances of our Lord are embedded in the discourses, but the task of separating the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus from the author's interpretation is impossible.

We shall, therefore, confine our attention mainly to the Synoptic Gospels and examine all four of their principal sources—Q (the non-Marcan material common to Matthew and Luke), Mark, L (matter peculiar to Luke), and M (matter peculiar to Matthew—Matthew of course being the name of the Gospel, not of its author).

First we turn our attention to a feature which is common to all these sources: our Lord's idiom, 'Verily I say unto you.' This is clearly a deliberate substitution for the prophetic: 'Thus saith the Lord': and is not this substitution virtually a claim to identity with the Jahveh of the Old Testament? Indeed, in some passages, for instance in His command to love one's enemies, He deliberately and explicitly sets His own authority above that of the Mosaic Law.[2] The prophets of old had said: Hear the words of the Lord and do them. Jesus said: The wise man is he who heareth My words and doeth them.[3]

Next, there are a certain number of sayings which can be shown to have been recorded both in Q and in Mark, that is in both of our two earliest documents. The authority for these passages is therefore very high indeed.

One of these sayings is of supreme importance for our purpose. It occurs in Mk 8^{34-35}, Lk 9^{23-24} 14^{27} 17^{33}, Mt 16^{24-25} 10^{39}. The Marcan version is as follows: 'And he called unto him the multitude with his disciples, and said unto them, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it.' Here and in Lk 9^{23-24}, Mt 16^{24-25}, this saying of our Lord occurs immediately after Peter's confession of our Lord's Messiahship at Cæsarea Philippi, and this is no doubt the original context. But the same saying occurs in a slightly different form and in a different context in Mt 10^{38-39} and in Lk 14^{27} 17^{33}. So that it undoubtedly occurred in Q as well as in Mark.

The important phrase to notice here is 'for my sake.' Who is this who calls upon men to sacrifice their lives *for His sake*? In the Old Testament the prophets and psalmists emphasize their oracles with the words 'for the Lord's sake' or more frequently 'for his name's sake'; but Jesus deliberately substitutes 'for my sake.' What is this but to claim equality with God? Jn 5^{18}, therefore, no doubt correctly interprets the earliest and best authenticated tradition when it asserts that the Jews sought to kill Him because He made Himself equal with God. Paul, too, is in line with our Lord's own thought when he refers in Ph 2^{6} to the pre-existence of Jesus in equality with God, and when in Ro 10^{13}, he virtually equates Jesus with Jahveh. Moreover, the fact that Jesus uttered these impressive and significant words immediately after Peter's confession at Cæsarea Philippi strongly suggests that Jesus interpreted His Messiahship in terms of Divinity.

We have another 'double attestation' in Lk 8^{21} 11^{28}: where Jesus plainly states that His word is the word of God: 'He answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God and do it' 'Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.' By the phrase 'the word of God' Jesus is clearly referring to His own word, obedience to which is an indispensable condition of a secure life (cf. Mk 3^{34-35}, Mt 12^{49-50}, Lk 6^{46-49}, Mt 7^{21-29}).

The next important passage is a Q passage. I am taking the evidence of Q by itself before that of Mark by itself because Q was certainly the

[1] *E.g.* C. J. Cadoux, *The Case for Evangelical Modernism* [1938], 84.

[2] Mt 5^{21-48}.

[3] Mt 7^{24-29}, Lk 6^{46-49}.

earlier source. A close comparison of sections of the Pauline Epistles with Q passages shows that the oral tradition of our Lord's sayings with which Paul was familiar was already in process of formation in the shape which it took in Q, especially as reproduced by Luke. This puts Q well before the death of Peter, which in turn preceded the writing of Mark's Gospel. It is significant that Mark who lays so much stress upon our Lord's work as a Teacher includes so little of His teaching in his Gospel. The explanation of course is that Mark knew that a collection of our Lord's sayings was already in circulation.

So we take Q first. And here the first important passage, which Forsyth called 'that embryonic Fourth Gospel,'[1] is Lk 10^{22}, Mt 11^{27}. 'All things were delivered to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father and who the Father is except the Son and he to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.' Those remarkable words of our Lord, authenticated in the very earliest tradition, assert a unique relation of intimacy and reciprocal knowledge between the Father and the Son; and they supply a real basis for the words in Jn 5^{18}, He said 'that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.' The Son of God here referred to is clearly Jesus Himself, and His relationship to the Father is one that could be asserted of no other; indeed it implies the pre-existence of Jesus in the bosom of the Father. An Eternal Father must have an Eternal Son.

Another important Q passage in this connexion is Lk 12^{8-9}, Mt 10^{32-33}.

Lk 12^{8-9}.	Mt 10^{32-33}.
I say unto you, every one who confesses Me before men, the Son of Man will also confess him before the angels of God. But he who has denied Me before men shall be denied in the presence of the angels of God.	Every one therefore who confesses Me before men, I too will confess him before My Father in heaven. But whosoever denies Me before men, I too will deny him before My Father in heaven.

Now who is this who declares men's attitude to Himself to be decisive and determinative for their eternal destiny? Who is this whose verdict upon men has such decisive importance in the eyes of God the Father? Do not these words of Jesus imply a claim to Divinity?

We now turn to Mark. The passage of outstanding importance here is 8^{29} (our Lord's question: 'Who do men say that I am?' and Peter's answer: 'Thou art the Christ'). It has sometimes been alleged that speculation about the Person of Christ did not begin till some years after Pentecost, when the apostles and early Christians began to reflect upon the significance of their experience of redemption. But clearly this is not so. Jesus Himself in His own life-time pressed upon the disciples the question of the nature and significance of His own Person as though this were a question of supreme and decisive importance. And at Cæsarea Philippi Peter had already divined the true answer. Jesus accepted there the title of Messiah, and in the words which immediately follow He uttered a detailed prediction of His Passion, thereby claiming the Divine prerogative of foreknowledge (cf. $9^{9-13\ 30-32}$ $10^{32f.}$). Moreover, as we have seen, the conditions of discipleship which He promptly laid down and solemnized with the words 'for my sake' show that He interpreted His Messiahship in terms of Divinity.

In Mk 2^{1-12} (The Healing of the Paralytic at Capernaum) Jesus claims, and is understood to claim, equality with God in regard to the forgiveness of sins. The enemies of Jesus at any rate saw the significance of this. They said in their hearts, as Jesus divinely perceived: 'Why doth this man thus speak? he blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but one, even God?'

In Mk 2^{18-20}, Jesus refers to Himself as the Bridegroom. In the Old Testament the covenant-relationship between Jahveh and Israel is often described as a marriage-covenant, Jahveh being the husband and Israel the bride. In referring to Himself as the Bridegroom, therefore, Jesus is representing Himself as equal with God. The old covenant of 'hesed' between Jahveh and Israel is now consummated in the new covenant of grace between Jesus and His Church (cf. Eph 5^{25}).

There are besides a number of revealing passages where Jesus lays significant stress upon the use of His own name, for example, 9^{37}: 'Whosoever shall receive one of such little children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever receiveth me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.' As Rawlinson says,[2] this saying has almost a Johannine ring about it; but it occurs in the earliest Gospel that we have. Whereas the prophets of the Old Testament invoked the name of Jahveh, the disciples of Jesus are to invoke the name of Jesus, by His own instructions; and whosoever receives Jesus receives God. Further stress on the name of Jesus the Christ is found in 9^{41}: 'For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in the name that ye are Christ's verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.' The significance which the prophets attached to the name of Jahveh is transferred by the Saviour Himself to His own name as being the Messiah.

We have already noticed the use of the important phrase 'for my sake' in a passage attested both by Q and by Mark. The same phrase also occurs in Mk 10^{29-30}: 'Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or

[1] *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 5, 275.

[2] *Commentary, ad loc.*

lands, for my sake, and for the gospel's sake, but he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.' Cf. Mk 13^{9}: 'Ye shall stand for my sake before governors and kings for a testimony unto them.' As we have seen, the substitution of 'for my sake' instead of the prophetic 'for the Lord's name's sake' is highly significant.

We will now turn to an indisputably authentic saying of our Lord which is found in Mk 13^{31-32}, where Jesus claims a relation of unique sonship to the Father. 'Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.' Even so radical a critic as Schmiedel admits that this saying could not have been *invented* by worshipping apostles, since it includes our Lord's confession of ignorance concerning the date of His Parousia. Yet in this saying Jesus claims a unique relationship to the Father which can only be described as Divine. Further, in Mk 14^{62}, in reply to the high priest's question: 'Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed,' Jesus said, 'I am.'

There is one Marcan passage which has frequently been quoted as proving that Jesus disclaimed Divinity. Mk 10^{18}: 'Jesus said to him, Why callest thou me good?' The question is addressed to the man who asked Jesus: 'Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?' The author of Matthew evidently felt uneasy about the words of Jesus, 'Why callest thou me good?' for he puts in their place 'Why askest thou me concerning the good?' The Marcan form of course is original and is retained by Luke. But Jesus is not denying His Divinity. He is trying to drive home to His questioner the implications of addressing Him as 'good.' Since only God is good, to call Jesus good is to equate Him with God. This is what the questioner had not realized. To be good without qualification is to be sinless, and no mere *man* is sinless. But the sinlessness of Jesus is amply attested in the New Testament. As Forsyth said (*Ib.*, 52), 'In Christ's own consciousness there is no trace of repentance. But in His teaching He was most insistent on repentance. He practised one kind of religion and prescribed another.' It is significant that Jesus said, 'If *ye* being evil' thereby by implication excluding Himself from the charge (Mt 7^{11}, Lk 11^{13}). The Fourth Gospel therefore once more correctly interprets the tradition behind the Synoptics when it represents Jesus as saying, 'Which of you convicteth me of sin?' (Jn 8^{46}). (Cf. 2 Co 5^{21}: 'Him who knew no sin,' and He 4^{15}: 'One that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin'; cf. 1 P 1^{19}: 'Without blemish and without spot,' and 1 Jn 3^{5}: 'In him is no sin.').

In Mk 12^{1-10} (the allegory of the vineyard) Jesus distinguishes His own status as *Son* of the Owner of the vineyard from that of the prophets as His *servants*. Moreover the allegory proves that Jesus foreknew and foretold His death. Its authenticity has been strongly defended by Burkitt who argues that an allegory which was the free composition of primitive Christianity would certainly have foreshadowed the Resurrection and not merely the death of the Heir.

Now we turn to L. First we have the Nativity narrative which plainly declares the pre-existence and Deity as well as the supernatural Birth of our Lord. Lk 1^{32-33}, declares the Divine and everlasting reign of Jesus. Lk 1^{35}, proclaims His Divine Sonship. But our concern is to discover words of Jesus Himself in which He states or implies His own Deity. We have the intimate reference 'my Father' in Lk 2^{49}. In Lk 24^{49}, the risen Saviour declares 'Behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high.' These words are such as none but the Divine dare utter.

Finally we turn to M. Here certain passages leap at once to mind—for example, Mt 10^{40}: 'He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives him that sent me.' Christians are identified with Christ even as Christ is identified with God.[1] Again we think of 11^{28}, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.' These are words which no mere man dare utter unless he be a megalomaniac; and Jesus was certainly not that; He was, as all the evidence shows, the humblest and sanest man who ever lived. Again, what are we to make of that remarkable saying in 18^{20}: 'where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' There is no need to assume with E. F. Scott that this saying belongs to an early Christian expansion of the tradition. We have already seen that such solemn and pregnant use of the words 'in my name' is well-attested in the earliest sources. . . . Next, in the scene of the Last Judgment (25^{31-46}) Jesus Himself is clearly Judge of all the earth, and men's relationship to Him and His brethren is all-decisive for their eternal destiny. Finally, the closing words of Matthew are as clearly a claim to Deity as any saying could be: 'All power was delivered to me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, teaching them to keep all the commandments that I have given you; and, lo, I am with you all the

[1] Thus we can say that God is in Christ and Christ is in the Christian.

days until the consummation of the age.' But it is doubtful whether this is an authentic saying of Jesus. Some commandment of Jesus to baptize there must have been, to account for the universal practice of the primitive Church. The use of the three-fold name, however, indicates a later development.

This completes our examination of the various strands of evidence, except for one important consideration: our Lord's use of the title 'Son of Man.' All the sources show that He frequently used this title in reference to Himself. Indeed, as has been said, whereas He *accepted* the title 'Messiah' when others ascribed it to Him, He persistently *claimed* that of 'Son of Man.'[1] What significance did He attach to this title?[2] The phrase in Greek is a literal translation of an Aramaic periphrasis for 'man.' As such it is the equivalent of the corresponding Hebrew phrase which is used in the Old Testament:

(1) As an equivalent for 'man' or 'mankind' (in Ps 8^4, *e.g.*); (2) In an apparently Messianic sense (in Ps 80^{17}, *e.g.*); (3) As a prophetic self-designation, especially frequent in Ezekiel; (4) In the sense of a 'human being' in Dn 7^{13}, where the human figure coming with the clouds of heaven symbolizes the Kingdom of the saints of the most High as contrasted with the animal forms which symbolize the kingdoms of this world. In Ethiopian Enoch and 2 Esdras the phrase is re-interpreted in the sense of a supernatural man, pre-existent in heaven from all eternity with God, a being who was identified with the Messiah of Jewish expectation and who was regarded as destined to come with the clouds and exercise judgment as the Agent and Representative of God.[3] It is this latter conception which primarily illustrates the meaning of the phrase 'Son of Man' as employed in the Gospels, though it is possible that the phrase carried with it some of the associations of Old Testament usage also, especially that in Dn 7^{13}.

Dr. T. W. Manson[4] may be right in saying that, at first, as Jesus used it, it had the corporate meaning which it carries in Daniel, and signified, not only Jesus, but His disciples as well, as the faithful remnant of the Old Israel and the elect nucleus of the New. But when He foresaw the failure and scattering of His disciples at His approaching Death, He Himself became, in His sole Person, the Son of Man. In His frequent use of it towards the close of His ministry, He undoubtedly designates Himself as, and identifies Himself with, the future Son of Man, who should come with the clouds. Jesus interpreted Messiahship in terms of the pre-existent, supernatural and Divine Son of Man, and He interpreted both in terms of the Suffering-Servant passages of Deutero-Isaiah. 'For verily the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.'[5] He thought of Himself as already the Son of Man on earth, and He uses the phrase especially in connexion with His prediction of His suffering and death. (Cf. 8^{31} $9^{12.\ 31}$ 10^{33} $14^{21.\ 41}$). It is precisely the paradox and originality of the Christian conception of the Messiahship that the 'Son of Man' who is the representative of God and ultimate Judge, who has authority on earth to forgive sins and is Lord of the Sabbath, is at the same time the Servant of all, who came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many (cf. Is 53). The road by which the Son of Man must pass to His glory is the road of the Cross. It is noteworthy that in Mt $25^{31\text{-}46}$, the exalted and glorified Son of Man is identified with the King who conducts the Last Judgment; and King is an Old Testament title for God.

An argument which is often brought against the Divinity of Jesus is that He predicted an early Parousia which did not materialize. The evidence, however, for the belief that Jesus predicted an early Parousia is inconclusive. In a passage of indisputable authenticity He declared that He did not know when the Parousia would take place (Mk 13^{32}). A reliable historian like Luke ($19^{11\text{-}12}$) tells us that Jesus deliberately tried to correct the disciples' assumption that the Parousia would be soon.

Against this, critics quote Mk 9^1: 'And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There be some here of them that stand by, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power.' But these words may mean no more than that Jesus Himself would be put to death, but that His disciples would live to see the signal vindication of His cause by the power of God, such as might be regarded as being in some sense a genuine coming of the Kingdom of God with power. It is only Matthew that makes it a reference to the Parousia, the coming of the Son of Man. Luke simply has: 'till they see the kingdom of God.'

If the ethic of Jesus is set in a framework of belief in a speedy end of the world, it is very strange that He does not phrase His demands differently. Thus He says that men are to be perfect, not because the world may end to-morrow, but because the Heavenly Father is perfect. And

[1] Both in the Synoptics and in the Fourth Gospel this title is employed solely by Jesus Himself.

[2] The following analysis is indebted to Rawlinson's *Commentary on St. Mark*, pp. liii–liv.

[3] Eth. En. $46^{1ff.}$ $48^{2ff.}$ $69^{26ff.}$, 2 Es 13.

[4] *The Teaching of Jesus*, 211–34.

[5] Mk 10^{45}.

He forbids His disciples to lay up treasures on earth, not because the world will soon come to an end, but because where their treasure is, there will their heart be also. Men are not to be anxious for the morrow, not because the morrow will never come, but because God is a Father of providence and love. Jesus undoubtedly foretold the end of the world and the eschatological consummation of history when He would establish the victory of righteousness in Judgment, but He probably did not say that this would happen soon. As Dr. Manson has said: 'The ethic of Jesus is no mere interim ethic to bridge the gap between the present and the future: it is the will of God, which, whenever or wherever the Kingdom comes, is done on earth as it is in heaven. The key to the whole New Testament lies in one phrase "the Kingdom of My Father."' That Kingdom is also Christ's Kingdom; for Christ and His Father are one; and this was Christ's own claim. Indeed Christ in His finished work *is* the Kingdom. The apostolic preaching of Christ took the place of Christ's own preaching of the Kingdom. To be in Christ is to be in the Kingdom.

As P. T. Forsyth declared: 'Faith in Christ involves the Godhead of Christ. . . . It means that the deity of Christ is at the centre of Christian truth for us because . . . it alone makes the classic Christian experience possible for thought.' [1] When it comes to revelation only God could do justice to God, and only God could have given us Jesus. Man could never have created or invented Him. It is the belief in the Deity of Christ which created and sustained the Christian Church: to relinquish that belief in deference to the new humanism would spell death for that Church. And as Forsyth says: 'What shall it profit any Church to commit suicide to save itself from slaughter.' [2] The guarantee of Jesus' Divinity lies in His unique sinlessness, the holiness of His moral character. This holiness included the quality of obedience, without which His character as man would have been imperfect. This explains those few passages which hint at His subordination to the Father, such as the prayer in Gethsemane, 'Thy will, not mine, be done' (Lk 22^{42}) or the Johannine saying 'My Father is greater than I' (Jn 14^{28}) or Paul's saying 'And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all' (1 Co 15^{28}). Since the exalted Christ has taken His manhood up into heaven, in that respect His perfection includes eternal obedience to the Father, though in essence He is one with Him.

It is the centrality and sovereignty of Jesus as Divine which gave to the New Testament the deep unity underlying its great variety. The reality and power of the unity are in exact proportion to the variety. We feel how potent the unity must be which can hold this variety together in the energies of its common life. As Denney says: 'The question raised by every demonstration of the undeniable differences which characterize the New Testament is, What is the vital force which triumphs over them all? What is it in which these people, differing as widely as they do, are vitally and fundamentally at one, so that through all their differences they form a brotherhood, and are conscious of an indissoluble spiritual bond? There can be no doubt that that which unites them is a common relation to Christ—a common faith in Him involving common religious convictions about Him' [3]—convictions encouraged and inspired by Himself. The New Testament writers would not think of questioning the real and complete humanity of Jesus, but when they think of the grace and peace by which the Church lives, they do not think of Jesus as merely sharing in them with themselves. They set Him instinctively and spontaneously on the side of God from whom they come. If the Father is the source, Christ is the channel of those blessings: the Father and the Son comfort men as the Divine power to which salvation is due. New Testament Faith is always faith in God, but it is always faith in God through Jesus, and fidelity to Jesus is that on which the final destiny of man depends.

The precise metaphysical relationship between Christ and His Father we cannot define or comprehend. As Mackintosh finely says in *The Person of Jesus Christ*, 526; 'It is in the unity of God as known in Christ that our minds come finally to rest. The triune life is apprehended by us for the sake of its redemptive expression, not for the internal analysis of its content. . . . God as Holy we name the Father; this same eternal God, as making the sacrifice of love and appearing in one finite spirit for our redemption, we name the Son; God filling as new life the hearts to which His Son has become a revelation, we name the Spirit. In this confession we resume the best it has been given us to know of the Eternal God our Saviour.'

[1] *Ib.*, 6.

[2] *Ib.*, 18.

[3] *Jesus and the Gospel*, 11–12.

Literature.

A VENTURE IN SYNTHESIS.

Professor Emil Brunner has now published the second series of his Gifford Lectures, as delivered in St. Andrews early in 1948—*Christianity and Civilization*, Part 2: *Specific Problems* (Nisbet; 10s. net). While in the first series the contention of the Lectures, that only Christianity is capable of furnishing the basis of a civilization which can be rightly described as human, was so far supported in that the Christian answers were given (from within the tradition of Reformation theology) to certain fundamental questions underlying any civilization; in this second series the self-same contention receives further support as the Lectures proceed from the abstract to the concrete, from 'Foundations' to 'Specific Problems'—from such problems of civilization as those of being and truth to such as those of science, wealth, and power. In the review of this Second Part, as of the First, we shall devote our space to an account, brief and summary and without comment or criticism, of what Dr. Brunner regards as the Christian answers to the specific problems he here discusses. But let us say at this point that although Dr. Brunner usually composes his books in German and places the task of the English translation in the competent hands of Dr. Olive Wyon, his Gifford Lectures appear to have gained in clarity and precision through having been composed in English. After all, one expects to find greater clarity and precision in the original as compared with the translated work. (The translator would, however, have said 'treatise' and not 'treaty' at p. 45 of the volume now under review, unless we have here a misprint.)

The first nine Lectures deal successively with the problems of technics, science, tradition and renewal, education, work, art, wealth, social custom and law, power. The tenth and last Lecture turns back from the problems encountered in those specific spheres of civilized or cultural life, and back also from the foundational or metaphysical problems dealt with in the earlier volume, to the comprehensive question behind this 'venture in synthesis,' What is the Christian idea of civilization and culture?

Technics, or technology (the specific problem first considered), which is become through modern warfare the most urgent of all problems, is not in itself a problem for the Christian man. The great question is whether without the moral dynamic of the Christian faith man will cease to pervert the order of means and ends.

Science, which differs from technics as being essentially a non-pragmatic activity, becomes a problem for the Christian man when it makes too large a claim for itself. The Christian conception of man is needed if we are to be saved from dehumanizing tendencies.

Tradition and Renewal, both of them positive values in the life of mankind, have been recently subject to a superficial evaluation productive of a false optimism. It is only through what Christianity calls conversion that the relation of tradition and renewal may be reshaped and unified, and a real power for progress become operative.

Education, to solve its problem, must discover the true relation between tradition—Christian and otherwise—and Socratic self-development. Pestalozzi and Kierkegaard have pointed the way.

Work (a valuable topical chapter, this, for the ordinary preacher) has its many problems in our day, though its main problem is spiritual rather than technical or social. A true solution can only come through a return to the Christian view of work as expressive of man's dignity through the service of God and neighbour.

Art in the modern world must guard itself against barbarism or crudeness as a result of the lost distinction between man and animal nature, and against formalism as a result of the disappearance of metaphysical and religious content. There are, however, impressive signs of a spiritual awakening, parallel to the reawakening of Christian theology and religious philosophy.

Wealth, which has become a problem for the world's conscience through the development of high capitalism in an age when the Christian faith—whether Calvinistic or not—was on the wane, may yet have its problem solved through the forces of direction and healing contained in the Christian faith, such as the sense of responsibility, unselfishness, and the eternal hope.

Social Custom (*Sitte*) *and Law*, which in the new conception of them tend to be subordinated to the State, have their rightful place safeguarded in the Christian conception of man as at once an independent individual (as in Stoicism) and a person-in-community, but subject to the Divine sovereignty.

Power, which in the Totalitarian State is the grave of freedom, should operate not by compulsion but by conviction. Such power makes us free, and of such there would be great reservoirs in a pure, strong, and united Christian Church.

Sketching in the final Lecture *the Christian idea of civilization and culture* in rough outline, Dr.

Brunner prefaces his treatment with the question whether there exists a spiritual impulse behind civilization and culture capable of relating all the other impulses in the right proportions and producing a truly human life. There *is* such a spiritual impulse, he affirms; it is implicit in the Christian faith in its New Testament purity and dynamic. It is one thing, however, to know the way; another, to follow it. He cannot but allow that the gates of the future are open.

W. FULTON.

PENTATEUCHAL CRITICISM.

Seventeen years ago two German scholars, Paul Volz and Wilhelm Rudolph, ventured to assert that the Pentateuchal document 'E' never had any independent existence, but consisted only of supplementary expansions of 'J.' A Canadian scholar, Dr. F. V. Winnett, Associate Professor of Semitic Languages in the University of Toronto, has now expressed himself as very much of this opinion, so far at least as the Books of Exodus and Numbers are concerned, in *The Mosaic Tradition* (University of Toronto Press and Oxford University Press; 28s. net).

Dr. Winnett says that 'a student approaching the subject for the first time may well feel that the Hexateuch is such a hodge-podge that no reliable reconstruction of Hebrew history and religion can ever be built upon it.' He confines his investigations to that part of the story which deals with the life of Moses, and the title of his book is to be understood in that sense. He believes that Exodus and Numbers constitute one primary source, which was later supplemented and re-arranged by 'P.' 'P' never existed as a separate continuous document (this also was Volz's opinion). Those features in the stories of the Plagues which the documentary critics have taken to be evidences of three strands of narrative ('J,' 'E,' 'P') are due instead to conscious literary artistry, and 'if it had not been for the three-document theory the unity of the narrative would never have been called in question.' The tradition at first circulated orally, and for it Dr. Winnett is content to employ the symbol 'J,' 'though only on condition that J be recognized as a product of the Northern Kingdom.' It was committed to writing probably in the middle of the ninth century B.C.

When the Northern Kingdom came to an end, Hezekiah of Judah, as part of his programme to popularize the Jerusalem Temple, issued an edition of this 'J' with some supplementary additions, the chief of which was the story of the Golden Calf, a violent attack on the Northern cultus. 'Not satisfied with this, the Jerusalem priests developed a completely distorted version of the national tradition which eventually took the form of the Book of Deuteronomy.' In this the familiar moral decalogue was substituted for the original Mosaic decalogue, which consisted of the ritual precepts of Ex 20^{23-26} 23^{10-19} (now found in the Book of the Covenant, Ex 20^{23}–23). 'The book was hidden in the temple and "found," probably not long afterwards, in 621 B.C. King Josiah seems to have been completely deceived by the fraud, if he was not a party to it, and the Code of Deuteronomy became the law of the land.' A second Judæan recension was promulgated by Ezra, *c.* 397 B.C. This was an attempt to harmonize Hezekiah's recension with the Deuteronomic distortion of it, and resulted in 'confusion worse confounded.' 'The key to the Pentateuchal problem lies in a recognition of the fact that the tradition in its present form reflects the claim of the Jerusalem sanctuary and priesthood to primacy over the Northern, "Samaritan," priesthood and sanctuary, a claim which was without historical foundation.'

Dr. Winnett does not appear to be acquainted with what Pedersen and Mowinckel have written (in English) on the early chapters of Exodus. If he had been, he would have found some things to his liking. It is obvious that his reconstruction of the history of the Pentateuch is at many points, for example in what he says of the original ritual decalogue, extremely hazardous. What is incredible is that the Pentateuch, and Deuteronomy of all parts of it, should be the product of 'distortion,' 'deception,' 'tampering' and 'fraud.'

C. R. NORTH.

THE EPISTLE TO DIOGNETUS.

The Epistle to Diognetus has been fortunate in its editors in recent years. In 1943 there appeared an excellent edition by E. H. Blakeney, and now there comes to hand *The Epistle to Diognetus*: The Greek Text with Introduction, Translation, and Notes, by Principal Henry G. Meecham, M.A., Ph.D., D.D. (Manchester University Press; 18s. net). Its attraction lies in two facts. First, it lies in the Letter's own charm, for Lightfoot was right when he declared it to be the noblest of early Christian writings. But second, it lies in the fascinating problems with which this Letter presents us. Who was Diognetus? Is it possible that he was the artist who was one of the tutors of the young Marcus Aurelius? Who was the author? When did he write? Is it as early as A.D. 117 as Westcott thought? Or is it from the eighth or ninth century as Cotterill held? Or can it be, as Donaldson in despair suggested, the work of its own first editor, H. Stephanus, in 1592? Clearly a work which reputable scholars have

dated anywhere from the early second to the mid sixteenth century provides scope for fascinating treatment.

Dr. Meecham's edition is a most scholarly work. There is a very full Introduction. There is a most excellent section on Vocabulary, Grammar, and Style; and there is a really outstanding section on the Teaching of the Letter. These sections will stand for long as authoritative treatments of their subject. There is a most careful and detailed chapter on Literary Relationships; and there is a most useful and exhaustive bibliography. The text is well chosen and printed and the textual variants are set out beneath each chapter. Opposite the text a translation is printed; and if the translation lacks the grace of the Greek that was inevitable. We may quote what is perhaps the most famous passage in the Letter as a sample. 'For Christians are distinguished from the rest of men neither by country nor by language nor by customs. For nowhere do they dwell in cities of their own; they do not use any strange form of speech or practise a singular mode of life. . . . They live in fatherlands of their own, but as aliens. They share all things as citizens, and suffer all things as strangers. Every foreign land is their fatherland, and every fatherland a foreign land. . . . They pass their days on earth, but they have their citizenship in heaven. They obey the appointed laws, yet in their own lives they excel the laws. They love all men, and are persecuted by all. They are unknown, yet they are condemned; they are put to death, yet they are made alive. "They are poor yet they make many rich." They suffer the lack of all things, yet they abound in all things. They are dishonoured, yet they are glorified in their dishonour.'

The commentary is excellent. Whether it be consulted for linguistic purposes, for the background or for parallels of thought it is most full and most helpful. References are generously quoted, and the whole commentary shows an easy mastery of all the relevant literature. Each chapter is preceded by a most useful summary of contents. We have only two complaints to make about the commentary. One is the smallness of the type in which it is printed, but we realize that paper considerations may have made that necessary. The other is that the commentary would have been even easier to consult if the chapter numbers had been printed at the top of every page.

The book has the fullest and most excellent indices which make it easy to consult on any point. The whole work is a model of compression, and an immense amount of work and scholarship is compressed into a surprisingly small and convenient bulk.

We have nothing but praise for this book. We do not think that it is going beyond what is strict justice to say that it ranks with the work of Lightfoot on the Apostolic Fathers, and it would be impossible to offer higher commendation than that. Both the author and the publishers are to be sincerely and cordially thanked for it.

WILLIAM BARCLAY.

'THE SCHOLAR AS PREACHER.'

To have a volume of sermons published in 'The Scholar as Preacher' series is for a preacher at one and the same time a very great honour and a very great risk. It is an honour to have one's work appear in the familiar green and gold binding of that series which enshrines the preaching of so many princes of the pulpit; but it is a risk, for any book which appears in that series cannot but invite comparison with the sermons of W. M. Macgregor, A. J. Gossip, and James S. Stewart—to name but a few—which have gone before. Let it be said at once that Dr. Arthur A. Cowan's new volume of sermons, *Bright is the Shaken Torch* (T. and T. Clark; 9s. net), is by no means unworthy to appear in such a company.

Dr. Cowan's sermons have three great merits. First, they are on the central themes of the Christian Faith. Here are to be found sermons on The Atonement, The Cross, The Ascension, The Resurrection, The Sacrament, The Doctrine of the Trinity. No one could ever accuse Dr. Cowan of playing round the fringes of Christianity. In this volume we are at the centre of the faith all the time. Second, these sermons are models of sermon construction. From the point of view of the technique of preaching a young preacher could not do better than study this volume. Dr. Cowan is a strong believer in the method of choosing three heads and expounding them. If he does not altogether on occasion escape the danger of preaching what is in reality three related sermons, he certainly does make sure that the hearer or the reader will retain in his memory at least the heads of the sermon. And third, these sermons are mines of sermon illustrations. The illustrations are quite unhackneyed. They are drawn from all kinds of sources. Here we find the saying of Dorothy Sayers, that the Incarnation is 'God writing His autobiography'; of Meredith, that so many people are 'wandering vessels crying for a pilot'; of Gilbert Murray, that 'there is a Friend behind phenomena'; of Thomas Hardy, that this is 'a nonchalant universe'; of William James that, 'there are three of me, a physical me, a social me, and a spiritual me'; of Dean Swift, that 'a man should never be ashamed to own up he has been wrong, which is but saying in other words that he is wiser to-day than he was

yesterday'; of Aristotle, that 'without virtue man is merely the most dangerous of animals.' Dr. Cowan himself can coin the flashing phrase, as when he asks concerning the returned prodigal in the parable, 'God might be fatherly, but would men be brotherly?'

The book takes its title from a saying attributed to Sir William Hamilton, 'Truth, like a torch, the more it's shook, it shines,' which is strangely reminiscent of Marcus Aurelius' picture of the character of a man being like a fire. A little fire is put out when anything is thrown upon it; but a great fire uses that which is thrown upon it to increase its blaze. Dr. Cowan's sermons will certainly do much to produce that faith which can indeed withstand the storms of life.

If we might venture one criticism, there is a certain preciousness in Dr. Cowan's style which sometimes does not ring quite true. Is it necessary to apply the adjective 'handsome' to Jesus as often as he does, as in the phrase, 'the handsome friend'? A phrase like that tends to jar rather than to enlighten the mind. Spots on the sun there may be, but the sun is still the sun, and this is certainly a volume of sermons which the preacher will find a stimulus for his own soul and a treasure-house for his preaching.[1]

WILLIAM BARCLAY.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER.

The First Epistle of Peter is certainly coming into its own these days. In 1946 Dr. Selwyn gave us his massive commentary. A year later Professor Beare of Toronto followed it with another. And now the Rev. C. E. B. Cranfield's *The First Epistle of Peter* (S.C.M.; 7s. 6d. net), which shows knowledge of both these books, provides the ordinary reader with an admirable running commentary on the letter.

Mr. Cranfield is well qualified to expound 'the Epistle of Hope.' We gather from his Preface that the letter was part of his spiritual equipment when he was on service in the Mediterranean. He has preached many sermons from it. And he has studied to fine effect the recent literature on it.

The result is a little book of a hundred and twenty-four pages and fifteen chapters replete with careful scholarship and with modern applications. To those who know it, First Peter is surprisingly contemporary, and Mr. Cranfield never misses a chance of fitting its message to our times. Take his comment on 2^3: 'The man who wants to follow Christ is, willy-nilly, "let in for" Christ's Church. To accept the Redeemer means also accepting the people whom he has redeemed. The free-lance Christian . . . is simply a contradiction in terms. . . . "Outside the Church there is no salvation" is binding on us—though of course God is not bound by it.' Or this one on the duty of humility: 'A single chevron can very easily go to a man's head, and even ecclesiastical power has sometimes a tendency to corrupt.'

If the exposition abounds in 'modern instances,' it is also very strong in word-meanings. Every second page shows how profitably Mr. Cranfield has explored the riches of Kittel's 'Theological Vocabulary.' Among many examples let us mention only his notes on *apostello* (11), 'holy' (35 f.), 'redeem' (38 f.), *logikos* (45), and *paroikos* (52 f.).

In our gratitude for his exposition, we have almost forgotten to say that Mr. Cranfield upholds the Petrine authorship, as Selwyn does, 'in terms which make Peter the senior partner in a joint authorship by himself and Silvanus,' and that he dates the letter about A.D. 63.

This is just the book for the minister who wants to go through a short epistle, chapter by chapter, with his Bible Class or evening congregation. It is packed with healthy Christian teaching. Only a good pastor as well as a good scholar could have written it.

A. M. HUNTER.

POWER POLITICS.

Lust for Power, by Professor Joseph Haroutunian (Scribners; 12s. 6d. net), approaches the vital problems of power politics and the tension between war and peace from an unusual and intriguing point of view. The author is vigorously opposed to the idea that the only way to deal with the strength of others is to match it with our own, and shows that the balance of power is more precarious than ever it was. The only effective solution is in 'getting hold of ourselves,' turning our thoughts in another direction, away from tradition and environment towards an understanding of human personality. 'We have been infernally clever with things, and abysmally stupid with people.' A distinction must be made, it is held, between the love of power (which might conceivably be justified as being directed towards security and the acquisition of the necessary conditions of the good life), and, on the other hand, the *lust* for power, the source of all our present ills. The main theme of the book is an analysis, skilful and profound, of this 'lust.'

It is not a very cheerful book, and at times it appears slightly cynical and disgruntled. And it is not very well balanced. Seven out of the eight chapters are devoted to clearing the site of rocks

[1] We have given in 'The Christian Year' section this month one of Dr. Cowan's sermons in an abridged form.—ED.

and very tangled undergrowth. Only in the last chapter is a noticeable superstructure raised, and this chapter is worth all the rest and might well have laid claim to their space. The author is not uninfluenced by the negations of existentialism, and makes great use of such terms as *guilt, despair, ambiguity,* repeating them too frequently without sufficient definition. His style is excessively epigrammatic, and he is obsessed by the idea of paradox, accepting several of the Barthian negations without their corresponding affirmatives.

He shows that in former times man had to be subservient to Nature, but that now machines have given him seemingly absolute power and created a lust for it. Limitations have disappeared, and everywhere we have transformed relatives into absolutes. A new infinite has been created, but it is in breadth rather than in depth, and means the sacrifice of the eternal to spatial boundlessness. Through the working of analogy our power over the machine and its products leads to a desire for power over our fellows, and so we have the diffusion of dictatorships, individual and collective. Still we are not satisfied—the machine has delivered the goods, but not the Good, and the reason is that we cannot but be aware of the void beyond the temporal life and the inevitable end for which we are doing little to prepare. So with the mass of men the argument runs that we should make the most of the fleeting moment, and grasp all the power we can, while we can. We must ignore the feeling of guilt arising, in relation to others, from the fact that we have not treated them as persons, and have allowed our behaviour to be poisoned by forgetfulness of the second Great Commandment. Civilization is not an adequate cure for our ills, and culture, manifested in philosophy and art, may easily become corrupted into subjectivity and asceticism. The only effective remedy is a recovery of the sense of guilt, and, along with it, of the sense of God, In the last chapter our author reaches an emphatic confession of the value of the Christian religion—' our very existence,' he says, ' depends on a revival of the Christian faith among us,' but we wish that he had reached this conclusion more directly, and not by such gloomy and devious paths. We hope that this book is the preliminary study for one of more positive character, to which, having read this one, we shall certainly look forward.

W. S. URQUHART.

METHODISM AND EDUCATION.

The number of books on the history of Methodism is legion, and yet, curiously enough, little has been written on the influence of the Methodist Movement in the field of education. The more welcome, therefore, is *Methodism and the Education of the People, 1791–1851,* by the Rev. H. F. Mathews, M.A., B.D. (Epworth Press; 13s. 6d. net).

John Wesley, though he described himself as ' a man of one book,' was an omnivorous reader, and by the formidable ' book lists ' he prescribed for his preachers he denied in advance the charge that they were more or less illiterate. He established boarding-schools in various places, notably at Kingswood, and here his notion that ' he who plays when he is a child will play when he is a man ' was sternly carried out. His cheap tracts, distributed throughout the country by his preachers, and his fifty-volume ' Christian Library,' showed his concern for the education of his people. His followers were in this matter no whit behind their mentor. Methodism was in the forefront of the Sunday School Movement, and by this and other means (such as the class-meeting and reading circles) the educational standard of its members was raised.

Apart from a few isolated instances of private enterprise, Methodism was slow to enter the specifically educational field, and it was not until 1838 that the establishment of day schools became a connexional policy. Thereafter, remarkable strides were made, and by 1869 the Methodists had spent a million pounds on their schools and had built a teacher training college. All this and more is recounted by the Chaplain of Rydal School, Colwyn Bay, and to his pages we must refer those who wish to know more of the educational policy of Methodism, its co-operation with the State, and its expression in missionary work overseas. The documentation and bibliography are as complete as one could wish and make the survey authoritative in every way.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

Messrs. A. and C. Black are publishing a series of useful and attractive books under the general title of ' Bible Key Words from Gerhard Kittel's " Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament," ' the editor and translator being the Rev. J. R. Coates, formerly of the Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham. Several volumes of this great dictionary or encyclopædia were published before 1939 and the work is now in resumed production, though Gerhard Kittel himself died in 1948. Four titles of selected articles from the ' Wörterbuch ' have already been announced: *Love, The Church, Sin, Righteousness.* Of these the first two have been already published in the English translation, the cost of each volume being 6s. net.

In the Preface to *Love* (by Gottfried Quell and Ethelbert Stauffer), the editor gives an account of

Gerhard Kittel, who was at once a great scholar and a man of simple Christian faith, and recalls that Kittel's aim in the 'Wörterbuch' was not only to serve the scholar but also to help the preacher. The two volumes before us show clearly that this aim has been so far realized, and will doubtless continue to be realized as the great work goes on to its completion.

In this first volume of the projected series Professor Quell (Rostock), treats of Love in the Old Testament, and Professor Stauffer (Erlangen), contributes the succeeding sections: The Words for Love in Pre-Biblical Greek; Love in Judaism; Jesus; The Apostolic Age; The Sub-Apostolic Age. The subject, as the editor remarks, is central both for theology and for religion in a disordered world.

The second volume, *The Church* (Karl Ludwig Schmidt), is also a learned and illuminating contribution to its great subject. It is from the pen of another distinguished Professor, who teaches New Testament Theology at Basle. In this volume linguistic questions are specially examined, especially in relation to the disputed verses Mt 16^{18} and 18^{17}, and the Pauline teaching is expounded at length. The editor expresses the conviction that Schmidt's arguments cannot fail to help theology to be Biblical, and may help the Church to be Christian.

Stories from Holy Writ, by Helen Waddell (Constable; 8s. 6d. net), were written nearly forty years ago, but the authoress has not hitherto collected them for publication in book form because she was afraid of lessening the grandeur of the Authorised Version. She need not have been so diffident; for the stories, all of them, preserve the dignity of the original, and are told in vivid language which will hold the attention of children and rouse their interest in the pathos and tragedy associated with the Old Testament heroes. The stories of Saul and Nehemiah are specially impressive as they are here told. The stories based on the New Testament are of slightly different character, mostly strikingly beautiful vignettes of a single scene, perhaps too subtle for the immediate appreciation of children, but sure to retain a place in their memory.

This series—*Study Notes on the New Testament*, compiled by the Rev. Greville P. Lewis, B.A., B.D. (Epworth Press; 10s. 6d. net)—was intended primarily for those training to become Local Preachers in the Methodist Church, but it will be found useful in much wider circles. The book explicitly presupposes throughout that the students are familiar with Professor A. M. Hunter's 'Introducing the New Testament.' The notes are simple but illuminating, and the compiler has obviously kept himself abreast of recent New Testament scholarship and exegesis. He is more modernist than fundamentalist, and, although unwilling to startle those who have been brought up in traditional beliefs, he refuses to allow his readers to become wedded to interpretations which wider contacts may constrain them to modify, to the greater good of both themselves and their hearers. The notes on the Johannine Gospel and Epistles are particularly valuable.

A Theology of Christian Action, by Canon L. John Collins, M.A. (Hodder and Stoughton; 5s. net), embodies the Lichfield Cathedral Divinity Lectures for 1948. It has three chapters. The first is on 'The Revolutionary Gospel' in which the thesis is that the Church 'should be the instrument for revolutionizing with the power of God's suffering love all forms of religious and secular thought and action.' The second is entitled 'The Broken Body' and shows how as the physical body of Christ was broken His body in the Church has suffered the same fate. The third is called 'Towards Unity,' and calls on the churches to make clear to themselves that in which Christianity lies and to unite in common action for Christian ends. 'Common action in political and social affairs is an essential element of the work of the churches here on earth.'

The style of the book is rather that of the spoken than the written word. It is a grave defect that it quotes Scripture passages very frequently and yet never gives the Scripture reference. The title claims a good deal more than the book in fact gives; and sentences like, 'The Church is revolutionary by divine intent in the sense that it is catalytic,' are surely unnecessary. For all that, this book presents a challenge which the churches must face, and will certainly stimulate thought.

The last few years have seen a steady stream of 'anti-Marcionite' books on the Old Testament. The latest is *The Christian Significance of the Old Testament*, by the Rev. A. J. B. Higgins, M.A., B.D., Ph.D., Lecturer in the New Testament and in Biblical Theology, New College, London (Independent Press; 8s. 6d. net). The book is addressed to the ordinary educated Christian, but should also be of service to teachers and theological students.

Instead of merely denouncing Marcionism, Dr. Higgins gives an account of what Marcion actually taught. He then discusses some difficulties of the

Old Testament, its miraculous elements and the sub-Christian morality of many of its early ideas. Then follows a chapter on ' The Christward Look of the Old Testament,' which is mainly concerned with the prophets. The interpretation of the Old Testament in the New, and the history of its interpretation in the Church, are described in some detail. The chief link between the two Testaments is ' the missionary call to Israel.' This call was obeyed by a remnant and was more fully answered by the Christian Church. The response of the Church was ' due to the impelling force of Jesus the Messiah, who himself as the bringer of salvation became the subject of the New Israel's missionary message.'

Dr. Higgins argues that when the Church, as against Marcion, insisted on retaining the whole of the Old Testament in its Canon of Scriptures, it was almost obliged, since it had as yet no historical sense, and no conception of progressive revelation, to interpret the Old Testament allegorically. We to-day can see something of value even in its more primitive elements. ' They are an essential part of the Old Testament, being records of the childhood stage in the understanding of revelation.' The Old Testament is one, and we cannot jettison large parts of it and keep what we regard as suitable for devotional use. ' The Old Testament is a part of the whole Biblical Christian record of God's self-revelation. . . . What took centuries in the history of a people, and stopped short of the goal, was realized at last through the intensity of the divine life in one man.'

With the revival of interest in the writings of the Protestant Reformers a welcome should be given to the publication in English of a little-known work of John Calvin. It is his *Instruction in Faith*, which originally appeared in French in 1537, being written for the people of Geneva at the request of William Farel. It is said to present in popular form the essence of the 1536 edition of the ' Institutes.' The English translation has been published by the Lutterworth Press (7s. 6d. net), and the translator is Paul T. Fuhrmann, of the Department of History of Christianity, Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta. He has done his work with care and competence, and has added to our indebtedness to him by furnishing a Historical Foreword and Critical and Explanatory Notes. He claims that this writing offers the ' early, elemental and positive core ' of Calvin's religion.

The Distinctive Free Church Witness To-day (Religious Education Press ; 3s. 6d. net), by the Rev. Henry T. Wigley, B.A., B.D., General Secretary of the Free Church Federal Council, is largely composed of the contents of a series of articles written for ' The Free Church Chronicle.' At the outset it is contended that the Separatists who left the Church of England in Elizabeth's time, and were the forerunners of the Baptists and Congregationalists, were right in their opinion that the Anglican Church had retained elements of compromise—seeds, as it were, of Catholicism. Their rightness has been shown in the rise of the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches in England and in the Catholicizing influence of the Tractarian Movement. The main part of the book consists of a vigorous but charitable defence of the Free Church standpoint in detail. Inevitably such subjects as direct access, simplicity of worship, the priesthood of all believers, the right of private judgment, the nonconformist conscience, freedom from State control, are passed under review. The book is addressed particularly to Free Churchmen of the younger generation, and a questionnaire has been added to each chapter for use in study circles, lay preachers' classes and young people's fellowships of all kinds.

The Rev. W. H. Elliott, well known as a broadcaster and popular preacher, is also an essayist of repute, and in his book, *So This is Life* (Skeffington ; 8s. 6d. net), he has collected some of the more recent of his journalistic contributions. The underlying theme is that there is a pattern of events which reveals itself for each one of us as the will of a Higher Power, summoning us to the surrender, but not the annihilation, of our freedom. The style is crisp and forceful, in danger occasionally of being spasmodic, and the longer essays, because they have more chance of continuity of thought, are better than the shorter. A frequently recurring saying, ' The time is later than you think,' indicates a vein of deep seriousness, and the writer, having withdrawn from more active life and entered what he calls ' the twilight of the mind,' and being unwillingly a town-dweller, confesses to a wistful longing for the country and the ' good earth,' to a desire for quietness in the midst of this busy mechanistic world where we are apt to forget that the chief of our industries ought to be the making of men. He shows a great tenderness toward the ' teenagers ' and the young men and women whose lives have been warped and frustrated by the War, and protests vehemently against any cruelty to the young delinquents and against the failure of parents to understand the problems of their adolescent families. On the credit side, he pays a glowing tribute to the self-sacrifice and heroism of the housewives, both now and in the years of actual war. The sincerity of the book is obvious throughout, and there are many passages of great beauty.

The Second Coming of Christ.

By the Reverend S. P. T. Prideaux, D.D., Canon of Salisbury.

I.

What is our reaction to Advent? To the hymns 'Great God, what do I see and hear,' 'Lo! He comes with clouds descending,' 'Day of Wrath! O day of mourning?' To the 'dooms' in our ancient churches? Is it terror, fear, conviction of sin, or merely amusement, pity? Has the Second Coming and its traditional presentation any meaning for us, any place in our scheme of life? Are we 'looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God?' (2 P 3^{12}). It has an unbroken and essential place in our Creed, in the Lord's Prayer, in the *Te Deum*; the New Testament is full of it and ends with the prayer 'come, Lord Jesus'; it is the opening theme of the Church's Calendar.

At first it was expected almost immediately; Maran-atha was an inspiring and a warning watchword, 'the Lord is at hand' (1 Co 16^{22} and cf. many other passages); but apparently it never happened; there was no trumpet or archangel's voice or clouds of glory, no great white throne of judgment or opening of books, no Son of man, no destruction of the world by fire; either then or since (cf. 2 P 3^{4}). And how many Advents has the Church kept?

II.

For a right judgment in this matter we must first study the background of the New Testament, its religious ideas and some history. There is first the Old Testament itself and its teaching about the *Day of the Lord*, the *last days*, when God comes in power, with signs and wonders and portents (a very lurid picture); sometimes He sends another to represent Him; there is to be a great conflict in which God and the good and right are victorious; and then the world is to be judged, the Chosen People recalled from exile, re-established in their own land, and an unending era of great prosperity and happiness inaugurated.

But the Exile came and the Dispersion continued; there was no *Day of God*, of deliverance; and after 170 B.C. the diabolical oppression by Antiochus Epiphanes. The faith of Israel was not to be extinguished and there was a great revival of the ideas and teaching which we call 'apocalyptic,' and with much elaboration of content and idea, not always consistent. The chief thoughts traceable in the relevant literature (Daniel, Enoch, etc.) are that God has a purpose in history, especially for Israel; that He will be supreme and uphold the right; that there will be a 'Messiah' (Anointed One), called Son of David, Son of man; there will be a new spiritual covenant and fresh outpouring of the Spirit of God, a rising again of the dead, a final judgment and destruction of the wicked, a new heaven and earth, and the religion of Israel will be accepted universally. This teaching became very popular. The books were translated into several languages and undoubtedly gave great help to the devout in times of persecution and suffering. It was largely Galilean and the official scribes held it unorthodox, although it was based on the Old Testament as much as was their own teaching. In Palestine it became more and more political, nationalist, and under the Roman domination the Zealot Movement grew out of it. And all this throws much light on the references to our Lord as King, Son of David, the giving of tribute to Cæsar, His Galilean origin, the Palm Sunday procession, and Ac 1^{6}. 'Apocalyptic' was very much 'in the air,' especially in Galilee, in the common thought and talk of the people; it was natural for our Lord to use it, and persecution later encouraged it among His followers who formed the Church; this is why there is so much of it in the New Testament.

III.

(1) In the actual words of the New Testament we must be careful for the right translation. In Mt 13^{39} the *harvest* is not the *end of the world*, the destruction of the physical universe, but *the consummation of the age* (RVm), the summing up, bringing to a head, to completion, of an era or epoch. It is not a sudden termination, and the harvest is not a destruction except of evil, but the reaping and ingathering of what has been sown. The concept denotes quality and character rather than time; the thought is of goodness taking the place of evil.

(2) This teaching occurs in all three Synoptic Gospels, especially Mk 13, Mt 24, 25, Lk 21, and interpretation is difficult, because some of our Lord's words are general but others have a definite reference to the siege of Jerusalem (A.D. 66–70). We should note that while our Lord, as a Galilean Jew, naturally used the words and ideas of His own day, based on the Old Testament and on more

recent literature, He develops, raises, purifies, moralizes, and spiritualizes them; He gives less of the lurid and florid detail as to particular happenings and is more general and vague, and deals more with principles than events.

In His teaching He insists that the Kingdom is not only future but actually present (Mk 1^{15}, Lk 11^{20} 17^{21}, Mt 11^{7}). It works sometimes suddenly and by catastrophe (Parables of the Drag Net, Pounds, Talents, Unfaithful Servant, Virgins); but sometimes gradually, by evolution (the Sower, the Seed growing secretly, the Mustard Seed, the Leaven, the Tares). Actually both descriptions are true and there is only one process; for a catastrophe is the result of a long hidden process; a dam bursts after prolonged rain, a revolution breaks out after many years of discontent and propaganda.

His forecast of the siege of Jerusalem was not beyond the range of ordinary human foresight, but it is the mingling of the general and the particular and the linking of the Messianic Kingdom with the fall of Jerusalem which cause perplexity. Of this, three explanations are possible: (*a*) He was merely a child of His own age, and mistaken as to His Messiahship, and His words were falsified by events; but this is hard to reconcile with the later faith and history of the Church and Christianity. (*b*) There is textual confusion, and some Jewish or Jewish-Christian apocalypse has been worked into the text; but of this there is no indication in the MSS. (*c*) Our Lord was misunderstood and wrongly reported by His hearers. While this is not entirely satisfactory, it seems the most probable explanation, for the disciples' minds would be full of apocalyptic teaching; He Himself certainly used its thoughts and phrases; and they may well have read more into His words than He intended, *i.e.* their own ideas and hopes and wishes; He may well have foreseen the fate of Jerusalem and spoken of it to prepare them for it; He also said that He did not know the exact future (Mt 24^{36}).

It should be noted that Matthew (the Jewish Gospel) develops and exaggerates Mark, while Luke minimizes the teaching, though he gives more particular detail. We may be confident that under God's providence no serious or fundamental error will have survived, and we must distinguish between truth of fact and detail, and truth of idea and principle.

(3) Acts, Hebrews, and the Revelation of St. John are on traditional lines though the vivid imagery of the latter is controlled by careful thought and moral and spiritual ideals. In St. Paul's teaching there is a marked growth and change and a mingling of material and spiritual conceptions, of mystical and moral with historical and physical. In First and Second Thessalonians he gives traditional and detailed teaching; in the second group of letters (First and Second Corinthians and Romans) he begins to change, and the return is more distant, the physical details are dropped, more stress is laid on the moral and spiritual elements, and he looks to a gradual conversion of the Gentiles and ingathering of the nations. In the third group there is further advance; he expects no immediate return but a gradual salvation of all men and of the spiritual world as well (Colossians and Ephesians). He appreciates the Kingdom as a present reality but recognizes that the full realization is far off. In the fourth group he looks forward to *that day* but says nothing as to how or when or where Christ will come. Outside the Gospels our Lord is hardly if ever named *Son of man*.

(4) In interpreting the New Testament we should not take texts in isolation but study passages as a whole, and the teaching of each writer as a whole, and compare and balance their respective teachings in general; and then compare these with that of our Lord. Remember also that apocalyptic was not central in His teaching; it is not to be exaggerated but to be balanced and qualified by the rest of His teaching. His authority does not stand or fall by His eschatology but the value of this depends rather on the value of Himself.

A literal interpretation will not satisfy even if radio and television make a visible bodily descent from the sky available to every one simultaneously. It would offend our sense of reverence, of what is fitting; it would repel and fail to convince the modern world; it would be a going back, a reversal of an earlier process; we do not need a second Incarnation; it would contradict the better part and the inner meaning of all the teaching (note Mt 4^{5}).

We must recognize that the traditional language is picture-language, symbolic; try and see the inner meaning and not mistake the husk for the kernel. The exaggerated, impossible monsters were due to the need of safety, they were a code-language; also to the Oriental imagination; they were an attempt to express the inexpressible, the transcendent. We ourselves use similar language: ' the sweetest flower that blows ' remains a ' rose ' even if it symbolizes the lover's heart. Jewish Rabbis did not take the words literally. So the throne, judgment and recording-books indicate a real judging by God and on spiritual lines. The trumpet, the voice of the archangel, represent a calling to attention, a challenge, a warning. Clouds of glory stand for power, a movement from heaven, an act of God, to be seen with the eye of the soul.

IV.

But there is some New Testament teaching still be to considered—that of the Fourth Gospel and the Epistles of St. John, notably Jn 14–16, 1 Jn $3^{14.\ 24}$ 5^{20}. Here *another Helper* takes the place of Jesus, the *Holy Spirit*, who is the Spirit both of the Father and of Jesus, ever present in the believer, who thereby is already in the possession of the *eternal life* of heaven. The plane is not one of time or space, of dates and history, but of quality, perfection, a matter of good versus evil, light versus dark, truth versus falsehood, right versus wrong. Judgment is already and always taking place even if the *last day* is still in the future. Note that elsewhere Christ's Presence is a fact of experience (Ro 8, 2 Co 1^{22} 5^{17}, Col 1^{27}, Eph 3^{16}, He 6^{4}), and it must be remembered that the teaching of St. John is of at least equal authority with that of the Synoptists; that the Church accepted it and teaches it; it is actually of greater value because it represents the latest and most considered thought and experience of the Christian community, and it has the further advantage of having passed through a mind versed in Greek thought as well as Jewish.

St. John clearly teaches that our Lord returned in the Person of the Holy Spirit, that Pentecost was the Second Coming, and the Epistles of St. Paul bear him out (in Ac 2^{17} St. Peter says as much). Since Pentecost Christ has been continuing and vastly extending His work, through His Spirit, in 'the Church which is His Body.'

This is not a 'confounding of persons'; there is one God only at work all the time (would not 'impersonations' be a better word?), and the Kingdom, *i.e.*, kingship, sovereignty, active rule of God, is present here and now.

Our Lord said He would come back and He did, and within a very short time as the Church expected. But this was not at first clearly recognized (it was Plato's *βλακικοὺ πάθος*—*Republic*, 432D). He has come again, and He is always coming because He is always present. We, now made at one with God in and through Christ and His Church, are already and always living in the *last days*. He comes repeatedly into the life of individuals; He is always present in the life of His Church, in its worship, its sacraments (could we have a 'Real Presence' without a real coming first?—and this is not being merely pedantic). He comes in Bible study, meditation, teaching, preaching; in prayer, in penitence, in example, in holiness. And in all these He is present as ruler and as judge (because of the challenge presented).

He comes also in beauty, of the natural world and of art in its many forms (cf. Evelyn Underhill, *Immanence*); in good work and good craftsmanship (cf. Kipling, *McAndrew's Hymn*); in goodness of every kind, which is an expression and actualizing of eternal, *i.e.*, perfect life. He comes in experience: of vocation, of vision, eye-opening ('The One who walked with starry feet the western road by me'—E. Underhill, *Uxbridge Road*); in the circumstances, duties and relations of daily life; in responsibilities (which are *judgments*); in conscience, approving as well as condemning, in opportunities of doing good, helping, witnessing to truth and right; in the crises of life (*κρίσις*, *judgment*, when we have *to judge ourselves*), life's changes; temptations, trials, griefs, disappointments are all times of judgment and He comes to challenge and to help; also the challenges of new thought. The crises of human history (1914, 1939, the discovery of atomic energy) are emphatically Divine judgments, both on man's past and for the future; they are Divine 'comings.'

'Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide' (J. R. Lowell).

V.

This teaching of St. John is most valuable and helpful, it is just what we want. It means that there is no delaying or disappointing to our hope, no undermining of our faith; it gives a real stimulus to love and good works, to doing our best; it is a real test of our love and our obedience to God; it upholds the 'social gospel' and encourages us to help the coming of the New Jerusalem. It is a safeguard against dreaming without action, against the wrong kind of otherworldliness. It is a stimulus to be watchful (the Scout slogan is right here), for our Lord may come to us at any minute—'the Master is come, and calleth for thee'; it is a stimulus to a high morality and to evangelizing both at home and abroad.

And it is the substance of our message to the world, our 'gospel.' We are to challenge the world with the active presence and work of our Lord here and now, with His moral challenge; His call to penitence and redirection of service, with the opportunities offered; with the joy and satisfaction of life in Him. (It is not only 'pie in the sky' but 'pie here and now'; the Christian does both 'eat his cake and have it'—Jn 6^{35}; it is the fairy cake of which the more you eat the larger it grows.)

Also a spiritual presence is the best and the most desirable, because it is available for all and at all times (which a single visible physical return would not be); it suits all sorts and conditions, the Marthas and the Marys. And man's true life is spiritual though begun in a material body; the

New Jerusalem if on earth *comes down from heaven*; it will not continue on the perishing earth but will be transformed and return to the purely spiritual; it helps man to train and prepare himself for the 'next life.'

But *the end is not yet*; we are still on earth, in the body, in the time process; history still goes on, is still in the making; *here we have no continuing city*; πάντα ῥεῖ; yet history and time must surely have an end. Also God does not reign fully yet—'we see not yet all things subjected to Him.' Christ is not fully recognized, accepted, served; His 'fullness,' 'the Christ that is to be,' is not attained, nor all humanity evangelized (Mt 24^{14}); evil is not yet overcome and removed or the judgment completed. We do not doubt the reality of God's power, righteousness, holiness, love, or Christ's victory, but the victory is not complete (just as Hitler lost his war when he invaded Russia, or in the Battle of Britain—but the final victory came long after). So there must be a final coming, a *last day*.

The problem is that of time and eternity. We are living under two sets of conditions at once; our feet are on earth, our heads in the clouds of heaven. Time is a necessary limitation now but it is not an ultimate reality. We can transcend it, however, even here and now; time means much to a child but less as it grows older. Some experiences take us right out of time—'with thee conversing I forget all time' (cf. Rosalind in *As You Like It*, III. ii.; Tennyson, *The Ancient Sage*; Newman, *The Dream of Gerontius*). Seers and mystics know this; the Eucharist is a timeless act embracing past, present, and future, linking earth and 'the whole company of heaven' (so that, strictly speaking, there is no 'moment of consecration'—a photograph is taken once only, though many copies can be taken from the single negative). The essence of the matter is not length of time ('everlasting life' is a wrong and misleading phrase; eternal life, immortality is more than survival of death) but quality of experience, intensity, 'voltage,' truth, goodness—

> One crowded hour of glorious life
> Is worth an age without a name.

Ultimately and fully it is the *Visio Dei*.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

The Battle of the Gap.

By the Reverend V. J. Abernethy, B.D., Berwick-on-Tweed.

'No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.'—Jn 1^{18}.

The talk of our town this week has been about the rescue of the crew of the six-hundred-ton Norwegian cargo vessel *Rask*, which struck a rock about fifty yards from the shore in foggy and stormy weather. The ship had heeled over to the starboard, and the crew huddled themselves together as best they could in the wrecked wheelhouse. Ashore a railway signalman heard the signals of distress, gave the alarm, and shortly afterwards the coastguards and life-saving crews were busy on the job of saving the seamen. A rope was sent out by means of a rocket, but it fell just short of the ship. They tried again, were successful, and one member of the crew came along the life-line. He had almost reached the shore when the line snapped, and although he was hauled to safety by the shoremen, the line of contact was gone and fourteen more men remained aboard the wreck. The shoremen commenced to work again, but now they were handicapped by the incoming tide. The ship was three hundred yards away, and all they could do was to make their preparations for when the tide should recede. In the meantime the lifeboat had put out of harbour—with the utmost difficulty—only to discover that the sea was so rough that they could not possibly take the men off the wreck. In the late afternoon the battle was on afresh. Extra gear and reinforcements of men had arrived, and with the aid of a long hawser they eventually fired a third rocket which reached the ship. The men came ashore one by one by breeches buoy, in an exhausted condition but still alive. The captain said that another two or three hours and they must have perished from exposure.

A journalist describing the epic struggle called it 'The Battle of the Gap.' That was an apt description. For ten hours the shoremen tried to span the gap between the shipwrecked mariners and the shore. It was not possible for the men to swim ashore—the seas were too rough. Contact had to be established through the air, and everything human ingenuity could devise was done to try and save those men.

No doubt the journalist realized that people are thinking in terms of ' gaps ' these days. There is, for instance, the ' Dollar Gap.' This exists because we want to buy raw materials from the dollar countries and we have not sufficient dollars to buy them. So our nation is trying to obtain more markets in America and Canada for our goods so as to obtain more dollars and close the gap.

But there is another instance of the ' Battle of the Gap ' which is not of recent origin. It is the gap that exists between God and man. Wise and able men have tried to close that gap, but not very successfully. One of the wisest of them, Socrates, said that we could not know there was a God unless He came to the earth in the form of a man. And the Christian faith declares that is what God has done. He has closed the gap, He has come to the earth in the Person of His Son, Jesus Christ. It tells us more. It asserts that Jesus has come to ' save ' men from their sins. Just as those coast-guards and their co-helpers were trying to bridge the gap between the wreck and the shore to save human lives, so, our faith declares, God has bridged the gap between man and Himself in order to save man. Don't you think this is a faith worth having and telling !

Suitably Dressed.

By the Reverend R. W. Stewart, B.D., B.Sc., Glasgow.

' How camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment ? '—Mt 22^{12}.

The volume of Mr. Churchill's history of the last War which is called *Their Finest Hour* gives the words of many communications that passed about armies and battleships and the planning of defence. And among all these important messages there is one from the Prime Minister to the First Lord of the Admiralty about a matter that might seem a mere trifle. ' Surely,' it ran, ' you can run to a new Admiralty flag. It grieves me to see the present dingy object every morning.'

That note was sent during the time when Britain was struggling alone in desperate anxiety and fear of invasion. Everyone was toiling for the defence of the country. What did it matter whether that flag was old or tattered or dirty ?

But Mr. Churchill thought it did matter. That flag on the Admiralty building in Whitehall was a sign that the navy was on guard and Britain unconquered, and he ordered that it should be a fine flag, bright and clean, of which every one who saw it might be proud.

There are occasions when it is proper that we should be well dressed. A lady told me lately of such an occasion that happened to her unexpectedly while she was on holiday in France. She had gone with her husband to watch the ceremony of the Dedication of a War Memorial, and because they were foreign visitors the polite French gave them seats on the platform. She was wearing a nice enough frock but no hat or gloves and she happened to be carrying a little bunch of flowers in her hand.

Presently, to her surprise, an official came to her and said, ' The Mayor's wife '—and she noticed near her a lady with a magnificent bouquet—' will lay her flowers on the memorial. And then the girls of Brittany '—and she saw two beautiful girls in their best dresses not far way—' will then lay theirs. And then you will lay your flowers beside the others.'

She was quite unprepared for this. Her bunch of flowers was not meant for a public ceremony. However her husband sent a messenger in a great hurry to a florist's shop, and he rushed back just in time with a splendid bouquet. And a lady sitting near said, ' Would you like the loan of my gloves ? ' And then a lady behind her said, ' Would you care to wear my hat ? ' So when her turn came she stepped forward in quite stately style and laid the flowers as a tribute from Scotland on the cenotaph.

In this text out of Jesus' Parable of the Wedding Feast a man is asked how he came in to the wedding not suitably dressed. By the wedding feast Jesus means the Kingdom of Heaven. What did He mean by the wedding garment ?

It certainly could not have been that any one by dressing finely or by any outward show can please God and make himself fit for God's Kingdom. So the wedding garment must mean a picture or symbol of the state of mind that we must have if we wish to enter the Kingdom. We are not to feel ' free and easy ' as if we had a perfect right to stroll in dressed anyhow. We must be humble, sorry for our sins, grateful for forgiveness, anxious to please God. To have such feelings in our heart is to have the wedding garment God requires His guests to wear.

A General Prayer.

Almighty God, the Father of our spirits,
who in Thy love has created us for Thy glory,
we bless Thee for Thy gracious purpose
towards the children of men ;
we thank Thee for the testimony of saints and prophets
in whom the seed of faith was nourished ;
we bless Thee that their hopes were fulfilled,
and Thy mercy and power to save
made clear and plain in Jesus Christ ;

we praise Thee for evangelists and apostles,
who beheld His glory,
and proclaimed His redeeming love;
for martyrs who being dead yet speak to us,
telling us that the faith is precious and dear;
for our fathers in this Christian land,
who bore witness to Thee.
Enable us now in our turn
to hand on our heritage with its glory undimmed.

O God, who art found of them that seek Thee,
we thank Thee for the fellowship of the Church,
in which we have learned reverence and trust,
and been brought to deeper knowledge of truth,
and to a clearer vision of righteousness,
and been taught the meaning of the Cross,
and experienced the influence of Thy Spirit.
We praise Thee that we are gathered in this place
sacred by many memories and prayers.
Let not the glory of the Lord depart from this house,
Let it be to this people and to their children
a holy place,
where men gather round the preaching of the gospel
as round a fire in time of cold.

Most merciful God,
who knowest our sin, our failure, our weakness,
we humbly entreat Thy forgiveness.
Give us the contrite heart, the grace of tears,
the godly sorrow that worketh repentance.
Deliver us from sloth and envy and ill temper,
from the sins that darken and defile our souls,
and make us unfit to serve Thee or our fellow-men.
Keep us in ways of honour,
so that we dodge no duty, shirk no burden,
snatch not at any greedy advantage,
evade no fair demand, betray no friend.
And let our integrity be not austere
but genial and friendly.
Give us strength for our work, courage and patience.
May we have loving hearts and willing hands,
eyes eager to see Thy kingdom come,
souls aflame with devotion to Thee,
whom we adore, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
One God, now and for evermore. AMEN.

The Christian Year.

WHITSUNDAY.

Everywhere, All the Time.

BY THE REVEREND W. H. MURRAY WALTON, M.A.,
VICAR OF BROMLEY.

'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.'—Mt 28^{20}.

'Yes, padre, it's quite true what you say. I should witness for God in my factory. But you just don't know what it's like. There are no others who think as I do, and quite frankly I've not got the guts to stand alone. It would be another thing if I could see Jesus Christ at my side, as you say He is; but it's all so vague and intangible. To say that He'll help me just sounds like wishful thinking. I don't see how He can, in a way that's real, I mean; I wish I could.'

Whether 'factory' or 'office' or 'club' or 'neighbour's house' be the correct word matters not; how often we've felt just like that! The presence of Christ seems so far away that the possibility of His influence being a shaping, inspiring thing—well! it may mean something to some people but not to us. And yet how we wish it did!

Now in order to try and meet what to many people is a quite genuine difficulty it may be wiser to ask what exactly was the secret of our Lord's influence. How was it that His contacts with the men of His day did affect them in the way it did? For men could not sit on the fence in the presence of Christ. And then, too, there was His effect on that little group of men whom He gathered around Him, His disciples—a typical cross-section of the nation. Had it not been for Him we certainly would never have heard of them again. Then there was Paul after them, who probably had never known Jesus in the flesh, and yet who never had a moment's doubt that he owed everything to this same influence. What was the secret of it all? Four possible clues suggest themselves.

First of all there was *the influence of Christ's teaching*. Though to-day we have only a saying here, a story there, the report of a conversation or the record of an address, or no more than a collection of sayings, often in the briefest form, yet we have enough to gain an insight into His remarkable powers as a Teacher, powers which we are learning to appreciate the more as we dig deeper into the science of education and psychology. Who, indeed, can deny the effect of His teaching upon mankind ever since? Nobody would claim to excel it. Read how it impressed those who heard it first-hand: 'the people hung upon Him to hear Him,' 'all . . . wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth,' 'he taught them as one having authority,' 'never man spake like this man'—this last-named from those who had been sent to arrest Him! The fact that evangelists writing many years after could pass on to us so much of what He said is evidence enough of the impression He made on those who heard Him.

But Christ had not only the charm of the skilled teacher; *what He taught rang true*. Men have baulked at His teaching; they have tried to explain it away; they have dismissed it as impracticable; but none have dared to say that it was untrue. Nobody to-day says: 'Of course at the time He spoke it all seemed true enough, but now in the light of our fuller knowledge we see that

He was mistaken.' No! the teaching of Jesus still represents the acme of truth. It creates a confidence to-day just as it did when He first gave it. Here was no quibbler, no weaver of sentences, no maker of formulae with a double meaning. Men might admit that His ideals were high, too high in fact, more than they could grasp; but nobody could challenge them as being untrue. It was this sense of truth, then, which, in the second place, inspired confidence, and indeed in no small measure accounted for His power as a Teacher.

But if He was not false, He had nevertheless an uncanny power of seeing what was. The hypocrite stood naked and open in His presence; he might bluff his fellowmen, but he could not bluff Christ. But this faculty of exposing what was wrong in man did not stop there; it was not just a negative gift. *He brought the sin to light in order to heal the sinner.* The woman of Samaria, despite her race prejudice and the added shame of her exposure, found herself an evangelist to her own people as she bade them 'Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?' Zacchaeus, chief of the money-lenders—quisling we would call him to-day—as he felt the searching nature of Christ's look blurted out: 'Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.' Peter caught that glance and 'went out and wept bitterly.' Even proud Pilate, representative of Rome, seven times over tried to secure the acquittal of One whom his conscience told him to be innocent.

Finally, there was *the gracious influence of His personality.* There is no doubt that Jesus drew people. Indeed one of the most fascinating studies in the Gospels is to collect and analyse the sixty or so references to people coming to Jesus entirely on their own accord. Men and women of all kinds, from all places, on every variety of occasion, singly and in multitudes, one and all, they made their way to Him instinctively and spontaneously. How utterly inadequate is Renan's attempt to explain the secret! 'His lovely character,' he wrote, 'and doubtless one of those transporting countenances which sometimes appear in the Hebrew race, created around him a circle of fascination; tenderness of heart was in him transformed into infinite sweetness, vague poetry, universal charm.' There was something far stronger in His personality than that; brought into contact with Him people could never be quite the same again. From whatever standpoint you regard Him, Jesus changed men.

'Yes,' says our friend, 'that may have been all true then; but what we are thinking of is to-day, the factory which I go to every morning.'

On the eve of the Cross, during those memorable hours so vividly described for us by St. John, five times at least Jesus referred to the coming of a Comforter. The Greek original means literally 'one called alongside' to help, like an advocate in the court. Only on this particular occasion He was obviously referring to His continued presence with them manifested through the coming of the Holy Spirit, 'another Comforter' as He described Him. The apostles later spoke of Him as 'the Spirit of Jesus' or 'the Spirit of Christ,' they seemed to be so intimately linked together. What was this Comforter going to do? 'The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things'—*He will teach.* 'Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth'—*He will tell the truth.* 'And he [the Comforter], when he is come, will convict the world of sin'—*He will show man his true nature.* 'Another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever . . . he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.' *He will be continually with them.* In short, this Comforter, of whom Jesus spoke, was going to do, or more correctly, was going to continue to do just what Jesus Himself had been doing, to influence them and help them in exactly the same way as He had been doing, just as really, just as consciously, only 'for ever'! In other words the influence of the Holy Spirit would be felt by His disciples, and by those who came after them, in just the same way as they had felt and responded to Christ's personality, when He was physically present with them. The only difference would be in the material sphere; He would no longer be with them actually in the flesh.

During the forty days that elapsed between the Resurrection and the Ascension, it would almost seem as if Jesus by His appearances and withdrawals was trying to wean that little group from a dependence on physical faculties to one of spiritual perception. He was actually with them all the time though they saw it not. Neither space nor time could separate Him from them. His influence could be felt, His presence was to be realized just as truly as when He walked Galilee at their side.

It is this truth, is it not, that we need to realize anew to-day? All down the centuries those who have grasped it and lived by it have found it to be true, be they scholar like Paul or kitchen-hand like Brother Lawrence, man of war like General Gordon or man of peace like Sadhu Sundar Singh. Grasp it, and be it in office or factory, home or club, we shall find we are not alone. Christ will be with us in His Spirit, giving us a confidence not of our own, a courage we know we do not

possess, and, above all, preparing the unknown way ahead of us, if only we will make the venture. This is the heart of the message of Whitsunday.

TRINITY SUNDAY.

The Threefold Community.

BY THE REVEREND H. F. MATHEWS, M.A., B.D., COLWYN BAY.

'These three are one.'—1 Jn 5^7.

In earlier days the doctrine of the Trinity caused less intellectual concern than it does to us. Men of the first century knew in their own experience that God was both Father and Son, and they realized too His perpetual presence in the Spirit. And, when all is said, it is only in experience that doctrine can rightly be based. It is folly to think that men of past days have sat down in their studies, closeted with their tomes, and set out to prove the existence of the Trinity like a proposition in Euclid, adding the Q.E.D. at the end as though it were signed, sealed, and delivered. Here were men who had met with the living God, and life for them had changed beyond all telling.

'This difference He has made,' they would explain. 'We cannot tell who He is. He moved in the affairs of men as the supreme God of the Old Testament, creating, sustaining, speaking through the prophets. Then in the fullness of the times, Jesus came. And "never man spake like this man." You cannot explain Him if you don't think that He was God. What He did and what He said and the influence He had upon us all stamped His revelation as Divine. Then He was snatched away from us. You might have thought that we should have been alone, and broken up under the strain of remorse and disappointment. But it isn't so. Ask Peter what happened on the Day of Pentecost in the Upper Room and in the streets of Jerusalem. Men are still wonder-struck when we begin to talk to them. That is the work of God, not our work. The "inspiration" of all is His, not ours—and that no man can deny.' That is where the Christian creed came from. It came from the experience of living men and women, and was the only possible expression of their faith. Otherwise, they must have believed in three Gods, which would have denied their monotheistic heritage.

This is unique in the world's religion. Christianity centres in an awareness of the Altogether Other. In the Shinto temples in Japan there are no images but a plain polished mirror which reflects the face of the worshipper. 'There,' it would say, 'is the human life which reflects the Divine.' That may be good Shinto, but it is poor Christianity. We look out upon the revelation which God has continually made, and we see not ourselves but God—the everlasting declaration of Good. To that revelation man has been given in every age a chance to respond. That response—an active outgoing towards the will and word of God in Christ—is what Christians call faith.

But the outcome of that Christian faith has always been seen in the new sense of community. The first Christians were a new community, sure of God, following Christ, inspired by the Holy Ghost. The same has been true of more modern men. John Wesley did not instigate a revival—he formed a 'society'—that was his name for it. His converts were men who were sure of God, working out the plan of Jesus, enabled to live a new life in the power of the Spirit. And to-day on the mission-field when Christianity breaks through the crust of paganism there is born a new community within the state or tribe, acknowledging God as Lord, seeing new hope in Christ, and made real by the Spirit. When anything happens to re-direct human life in a factory or a school or a university in this land, it is when the reality of God, the remembrance of Jesus, and the revitalizing energy of the Spirit together create a living 'cell' of Christian hope and faith within the whole.

But the newness of the Christian community is a newness from three points of view. Each of these may be associated with One Person of the Trinity, and we only have real Christian community when we have all three.

(*a*) First, there is a community within a *Kingdom*. Throughout the Bible, the idea of God as King is paramount. The Old Testament is the book which declares that God stands in a relationship of sovereignty to Israel. They were a peculiar people, and He was their covenant God.

So, when Jesus came to announce His great message about the Kingdom of God, He was using a form of thought which was common to His people. He saw God ruling every aspect of human life, and He saw all men (not only Israelites) as capable of loyal subject relationship to Him. We may never exhaust the meaning of the Kingdom as Jesus conceived it: but it is certain that He meant to show that with His coming there was to be a new conception of togetherness, and that the experience of that community would grow until it reached a consummation in God's good time. We do Him a disservice if we fail to remember how He reminded us time and again of the lordship of God. He who created the heavens has the final power of judgment; and every action we perform registers whether we help or hinder the King. 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren. . . .' God is not only the all-forgiving Father who yearns over His wayward sons. He is, in the teaching of Jesus, the King who wages

unremitting war against evil and who summons men to His banner. If we are to join that host, it will be only as we experience the thrill of loyalty to Him in our own hearts.

(*b*) But, second, the Christian community is a *Family*. The revelation of God was finally made through His Son. That is not a mere metaphor. When God wanted to speak about fatherhood and brotherhood—His own rôle as Father of each individual man and our rôle as brethren—He spoke in His own Son. Supremely, Christianity is the religion in which the individual becomes a man. God is no Olympian Zeus, hurling weal or woe indiscriminately at men. He is my Father, and, above all, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ did not die only for the whole world of men; He died for *me*. Though ninety-nine sheep remain in the fold, the shepherd goes out to seek the one. Here, again, is the good news of the Christian faith. The community of the Komintern cannot speak of the family as Christianity can, for it has no Father to adore and no Son to revere.

Lax of Poplar used to tell how he found himself in the small hours of a winter morning on the steps of Poplar Hospital with a woman who was sobbing her heart out because they had taken her child in for an urgent operation. Lax went with her to the ward and asked the sister, 'How is Babs?' 'Babs?' she replied. 'You mean Number 27. She's very poorly.' Lax went to the hospital superintendent and tapped on his door. 'How's Babs?' 'Babs? Oh, Number 27 upstairs. The report's here. . . ..' 'Can her mother see her for a moment?' Permission was kindly granted. Lax watched as that mother from a London slum tiptoed round the screens, put her cockney-washerwoman's arm under the kiddy's head, and whispered, 'My darling, what can I do for you?'

That is a parable of the Incarnation. Christ showed that God was my Father and I could be a member of His family. And there is no greater experience than that.

(*c*) The third community to which the Christian belongs is the *Church*. Once again the Church is not a conception which belongs to any other faith. The Church is no man-made society of people who accept the same dogmas or worship in the same way. It is a divinely inspired reality. The New Testament calls it a 'fellowship'—a community—created by the Holy Spirit. No man can create the Church. The Spirit of God makes that possible. For there is only the Church where there is the kind of revelation of God which came to men at Pentecost. That is why some of our societies are such mean travesties of the idea of Church. Few of us have ever felt the tongue of fire upon our heads or been driven out into the city with the good news of deliverance. But that and nothing else is what the Church is.

And, if our experience be anything to go by, we can explain that activity of God within our lives by no other means than by talking of the Spirit. It is a picture-word, of course, as all such words must be. If the ancient Hebrew borrowed the word for wind to describe his faith in the present activity of God, it was because he realized the profound truth which he expressed by saying, 'God breathed into man's nostrils and he became a living soul.'

A boy asked the old sailor on the quay, 'What is the wind?' The old man paused for a long while, with his splicing still in his hand. Then he said very slowly, 'Wind, lad? I don't know. I can't rightly tell. But I know how to hoist a sail.'

Tell what we mean by the Holy Spirit? No. We don't know. We can't rightly tell. But we have found sometimes in the company of Christian people the liberating experience of the living Church—that triumphant society which reaches beyond the compass of time and space—and we know that it is created by the indwelling of God Himself.

'And these three are one.' That is our faith. They are one because we know God is King of Life, and Christ is Son of the Father without whom no family on earth or in heaven is complete, and the Spirit creates the fellowship of the Church, which is the hope of mankind. So must we respond to this triune God by serving His Kingdom, by living in the family of His Son, and by being built into the sacred, world-transforming fellowship which is the Church of His Spirit.

First Sunday after Trinity.

The Beginning of the Gospel.

By the Reverend Arthur J. Western, Durban, Natal.

'The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. . . .'—Mk 1[1].

The opening of his Gospel is in keeping with Mark's direct style. The words which are peculiar to Mark are 'straightway' and 'immediately.' Indeed the whole tempo of the Gospel is of directness and urgency. It is in its opening stages that we perceive the differences. Matthew is concerned in convincing his Jewish readers that Jesus is indeed the Messiah 'according to the law and the prophets,' Luke with that lovable attachment to detail, loiters in the village of His boyhood and lingers with His early background, whilst the Fourth Gospel, reflecting the long thoughts of pious

and aged devotion, introduces Him in His philosophical guise and form—the ' Word made flesh.'

But for Mark, how He came to earth can be safely left untold, for what He was will appear in what He does. It will serve his purpose to record the type of things our Lord does and says and thus he rightly calls it *the beginning of the gospel.*

It must be obvious to any thinking person that any attempt to relate in detail the life of our Lord must be doomed to failure. Any assumption which would write across the page ' this the complete Gospel ' would by its very spirit of presumption be condemned. There are tomes written on Him and yet the last word has not been said. If I asked you to write out all that some dear friend means to you and you were to take the greatest pains and use the most exacting methods of recording your impressions, when you had finished would you in all seriousness say, ' That is my friend. That is what our friendship means to me ? ' I think not. Rather I am convinced that you would say with St. Mark, this is but the beginning. There are shades and meanings and implications and inferences which can never be expressed. How often we sing :

Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find
A sweeter sound than Thy blest Name,
O Saviour of mankind !

But what to those who find ? Ah, this,
Nor tongue nor pen can show ;
The love of Jesus, what it is
None but His loved ones know.

As we read the record of men and women born again to a new life, of the captives released, of the light shining in darkness, of the dead being raised, of the blind receiving their sight, St. Mark would have us realize this is only the beginning. For what is the whole point of all this ? If all its value is moral value, if it is purely a petty demonstration of His credentials, then it is not good news because it doesn't happen to us, even though it might be good reading. Good news is definitely something that concerns us. In short, when we read the written record of all He did, it is not a page of sacred biography or autobiography. For as we read we know He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think. This is but the beginning and, what is more, I would have you observe that such a beginning has a prologue.

Has a Prologue. It has been suggested that the Gospels are true simply because of the very fact that, unless there had been four disciples with the brains and ingenuity of Shakespeare, they could never have been produced as a hoax, or a fictional work. But more even than the existence of the records is the need of explaining Him Himself. Here is no religious genius but One who spoke with authority and not as the scribes. In short, His life as such implies a prologue beyond our comprehension. Over and over again the Scriptures re-affirm this impression. ' When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son.'

Do you remember the last time you were at the theatre ? After all the late-comers had finished falling over your feet, you settled down and for two hours or so you were translated into a new world. The play began for you when the curtain went up, but you knew that behind each character and back of each scene, all knit together to present you with a theme that would capture and hold you, were months of hard work.

Yes, when St. Mark lifts the curtain and says, ' The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ . . . ,' we are at once conscious that what we are reading and understanding is what appears but that back of all these miracles and away beyond all these gracious acts and stretching far behind all these wonderful words of love with which the Gospel is shot through and through stretches the infinity of Eternal Love. Of course that is the whole point of the Good News, isn't it ? That here is no life which is accidentally a good life, at last a suitable vehicle of the truth which God has been seeking to give to men ; that here is no fortuitous circumstance by which God can circumnavigate the idiocy and stupidity of men's sin ; but that here —listen to St. Paul : ' God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself '—here was ' the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.'

The beginning of the Good News was only such when men realized that it was no teacher come to offer his theories concerning eternal life, but here in all the fullness of His grace God was offering men eternal life. We are perhaps able to see it now as we reflect on it, but are we any wiser than they ? Are we able to see that it is for us ' The beginning of the gospel ' too, that He is seeking to begin a gracious work even now in your heart and mine ? Thus the beginning of the gospel implies not only a Prologue in the heart of the Eternal, it equally implies *an Epilogue* in the heart of the sinner, for ultimately the Good News has a vital concern with daily life and fellowship.

I have listened to many so-called gospel sermons and if I have one criticism of such preaching, it is that it tends to create the impression that once a man or woman has accepted the Lord Jesus that is the end. Far from it, it is only the beginning. When men and women did real business with Christ in the days of His flesh it meant the beginning of a new life. It meant the beginning of a

new and wonderful approach to all the old problems. Why is it that so many earnest folk in the Christian way seem to justify that advertisement we all know : ' Wanted a maid. Christian. Cheerful if possible ' ?

Nor must we delude ourselves that the problems with which the Church is now confronted are peculiar to to-day. They may take the forms peculiar to our day but in essence they are age-old. It is Paul who writes thus in one of his earlier letters, ' O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you . . . for ye did run well.'

How many of us have got past the starting-post ? We all lined up and with all the accoutrements of the race we stood a fine, bold, inspiring-looking crowd, but how poorly have we run. We are yet at the beginning. We have overlooked the fact that the world is a bridge on which we dare not build, but across which we must pass. We are only at the beginning of the gospel ; the goal is yet far out of sight.

Finally, it is because Christians have forgotten that they are on pilgrimage that the Church is constantly being subjected to a barrage of criticism. If we were to persuade the outsider that the Church is a community of sinners seeking to serve Him whom they know as Saviour and Lord, if we could say to the world this is only the beginning, we know there are breaches and marks and wounds in the Body of Christ, if we could convince the world that God is indeed beginning a new thing in our midst, that it is a beginning and only a beginning, the end of which is beyond our wildest imagination—for it hath not entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for those that love Him—I say that if we could convince them that we are but beginners and that we want them in here, not to be like us, but with us to seek to be like Him, then this church would really begin its work, and as each soul crossed its doorway we would be crossing a frontier over which is written, ' The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ . . . ,' and its epilogue would be written in your heart and life and across the social strata of this city.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Return Value of Exports.

' Cast thy bread upon the waters : for thou shalt find it after many days.'—Ec 11[1].

Dr. Moffatt construes the verse, ' Trust your goods far and wide at sea, till you get good returns after awhile.' This is a recommendation of export trade as the release from a contracted, stifled life. It tells people how to get out of their confinement and frustration into a spacious future. Let them expand their interest and activities, let them answer the call of the sea and experience its tang, and they will tap wider possibilities, and find that maritime enterprise pays. Transactions abroad will not only relieve distress at home, but will also bring a rich reward. Export trade will prove to be the means of survival and prosperity.

We live and thrive by our exports. Perhaps some of us are tired of hearing this, because we feel deprived of many desirable goods labelled ' For export only,' and we are hungry for much of the bread of happiness which has been cast on the waters. Will there be any satisfying profit from it, any adequate return-value ? Yes, but not at once, only after a while. John Cabot of Bristol was the pioneer of our foreign trade, but when he came back after discovering Newfoundland, Henry VII granted him only a sum of £10 as a reward, a scanty recognition surely. His son, Sebastian Cabot, carried the overseas enterprise further, as he was joined by purposeful men, and in the reign of Edward VI he founded the ' Companie of Marchant Adventurers to Regions, Dominions, Islands and places unknown.' That was how our export trade began, and its return value was not seen at once, but only after a while.

To-day overseas commerce is necessary for our self-preservation, and there must be self-discipline and self-sacrifice in order to export more and export it at a lower price, which will secure a foreign market and yield us the essential revenue. Necessity is instilling the principle that self-giving is the only way to self-fulfilment. Our aims must not be homeward bound, coming back to number one, but must be outward bound, serving the common good, if life is to be a more satisfying experience.

Our Christian faith is an adventure into the golden horizons which beckon and call the spirit to come. Schopenhauer said, ' It is wiser to trust fear than to trust faith,' as if belief were a sanguine bungler which would only get us into trouble. On the contrary, it is fear, apprehensiveness, that shuts us in, ties us down in wretchedness, so that we sink into dismal acquiescence and lose our health and lose our character. Christian faith is a venture which takes the risk of depending on a far-flung reality and leaps out to Jesus Christ for new and bigger life. It is like a transaction with another country. William James describes conversion as a union of a man's higher self with a ' More of the same quality which is operative in the universe outside of him, and which he can keep in touch with, and in a fashion get on board of.' It is getting out of one's self into a saving amplitude. The dejected disciples, who had fished in the dark without result and saw nothing for their work,

were told by our Lord to 'Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.' Life will not be 'bound in shallows and in miseries,' need not be a haggard monotony of defeated hopes and useless efforts, if people let the Master urge them into deeper experiences of God's purpose and new discoveries of His love. They must strike out at His command across the sea of troubles that dare them to advance, and find the larger developments He has in store. They must commit themselves further to the Divine truth that summons, and go all out into the deep. When the disciples did this they had a record catch, the biggest haul of their life. You see, the venture of faith is not merely our gamble but the Master's guidance, and when we move out to the wider, deeper waters of devotion it is He who is moving us, supporting us, and completing us in a success which is His more than ours. Thus the output of faith comes home laden with the treasure of new vision, new certainty, and new resource.

If Christian faith is a venture, so is Christian practice. Religion is not merely a private affair, for isolation cramps and impoverishes, and people must get out of themselves into the fellowship of the Church. The Christian life grows by transactions with the wider Christian community in ventures to promote one another's prayers and aspirations. Organized religion supplies the deficiency of personal religion. It has been said, 'No man is the whole of himself: his friends are the rest of him.' Yes, the social part of him, his intimates, his exports and risks in companionship, may be as decisive as the individual part, perhaps more so. A man's associates may be his better half, especially if they are his associates in the household of faith; and through their outlook and stimulus the Divine truth is more fully revealed. Even Luther confessed: 'At home in my own house there's no warmth or vigour in me, but in Church, when the multitude is gathered together, a fire is kindled in my heart, and it breaks through.'

Church members should not keep out of Church work with the idea that they wish to be left free. MacMurray has truly said: 'We can only be free in so far as we think, feel, and act in terms of what is not ourselves.' Service is an expedition into larger horizons. Self-centred people never see the inside of life and never have the blessed satisfaction of lifting others out of the depths. They know nothing of the return value of exports. Selfishness reduces them to a small, boring, fretful existence—is that keeping themselves free? No, they are dwindling in the sour backwater of egotism instead of developing in the venture to export. It is not what we hoard but what we give that extends personality and takes us out to the enlarging seas.

'Trust your goods far and wide at sea, till you get good returns after awhile.' The venture of service is seen at its full stretch in the missionary work of the Church. The Church has a mission to all mankind, and a stay-at-home religion is not Christian, because the receivers of salvation are under an obligation to be the distributors of salvation on a global scale. It is a debt of honour that must be paid, and when it is paid, what is the result? There is a fresh experience of God's victory. You know how Captain Allan Gardiner, an ex-naval officer, was the Sailor Missionary of Tierra Del Fuego who went to the Magellan Straits in a crazy old schooner to export the gospel, and such was the moral transformation in the barbarous natives that even Charles Darwin, on hearing of the change in the depraved scene he had witnessed, became a subscriber to Missions, though not himself a professing Christian. That old story is being repeated to-day. During the War, many of our fighting men were impressed by the bonnie work done by the missionary among the coloured races and thought it something to write home about. This was new testimony to the return value of overseas evangelism.

Missionary gains are the bread cast upon the waters coming back to us after many days and bringing a double enrichment, *verifying* our faith in the universal range of the gospel and its power to regenerate all races of whatever temperament and history, and *enlarging* our faith with the fresh insights and vibrant life of the younger churches, which widen our view and add to our religious experience.

But this is not all. The missionary enterprise of the last hundred and fifty years has had an even more promising result. It has brought brighter prospects for humanity by gathering believing hearts of all nations into a world-fellowship bent on pooling its Christian resources for a march forward against the propaganda and intrigues of evil. This œcumenical movement, which is resolved to combine and conquer sinister forces, has been assessed as 'the great new fact of our era,' the agency through which the Spirit of Christ may transform the world. It is a voyage into more spacious latitudes which makes the heart beat faster with hope, and the World Council of Churches is an adventure which contains the promise of a more Christian future for all mankind.

Such is the return value of Christian exports and of spiritual trafficking abroad. It establishes a friendship of reciprocal enlightenment and mutual service, and opens up new vistas of Christian progress. 'Trust your goods far and wide at sea, till you get good returns after awhile.' [1]

[1] A. A. Cowan, *Bright is the Shaken Torch*, 113.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Blood that Speaks.

BY THE REVEREND GEORGE M. DRYBURGH, M.A., GLASGOW.

'. . . the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.'—Heb 12[24].

How true these old Bible stories are! Jeremiah might well have been reading this old story of Cain and Abel, and then, putting down his Hebrew scroll to ponder over the way Cain's heart went down step by step into the awful blackness, he would say, 'Is my own heart very different from Cain's? I too have been filled with envy at other men's success. People listen to these other preachers; they won't listen to me. I should never have been a preacher. God has deceived me and I was deceived.' And as the sulking, morose envy crept round his heart, like a black Glasgow fog, he cried: 'O what a heart is mine! The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?'

For Cain's tragedy begins with a grudge—a religious grudge, the most dangerous of all grudges. It is a grudge against God for accepting Abel's offering instead of his. And as he didn't dare show it to God he vented it on his brother. We have a way of speaking of the good providence of God when we get something we had set our heart on. But when somebody else is preferred before us and gets some prize for which we had prayed and worked, we begin to speak of the injustices of life and say to our friends that it is difficult to see sometimes where the Hand of God comes in. And so jealousy and envy at the successful man get mixed up with our disappointment. It was this shadow that settled down upon Cain's soul, and he grew irritable and angry and glum. He hadn't much to say to his brother, and lapsed into long, sullen silences. God saw it and spoke to him a word of warning: 'Why are you angry? and why is your countenance fallen? If you have a pure and sincere purpose, it will show itself in your countenance. It will be bright and lifted up, not sullen and downcast, as it is now. But if you have envious and sinister thoughts, then sin is crouching like a wild beast at your door, ready to spring on you. You should conquer this temptation and subdue it, before it becomes too strong for you.' But alas! he did not then and there grapple with it and crush it. One day in the field he turned on Abel, dealt him an angry blow, and his only brother lay dying at his feet, his blood oozing out on the ground. 'Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own evil desire and enticed. Then, when that evil desire hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.'

And so the blood of Abel lies upon the ground. Cain runs away from it. Yet he never gets away from the cries of his dying brother. They had played together as children, played in the same garden. And now he has murdered his brother. The blood of Abel! The blood of Abel! It is on his hands. He washes them in the brook that bubbles out of Paradise, but no! nothing will cleanse them. Black, angry, sullen jealousy had killed his brother. God finds him coming all alone across the fields. 'Cain, where is Abel thy brother?' He does not look up. 'I know not. Am I my brother's keeper?' How low he has sunk, to fling a lie in the face of God and renounce all care and responsibility for his brother. God knows the terrible secret, though it may be buried from the sight of men. Cain becomes a fugitive. He flees not only from the grave of Abel but from the face of God. That is what sin always does. It makes us get as far away as we can from the scene of shame and it also drives us from the light of God's presence.

We have all the blood of some Abel on our hands. There rises to God the cry of some one whose good name, whose reputation, whose character, whose purity, whose happiness, whose peace of heart we have slain by some action, by some unhallowed look, by some slandering word, by some touch of envy, or greed, or lust or deceit. The deed is done and we cannot now undo it. We cannot take back these words, we cannot withdraw that black, wounding look, we cannot recall that lustful suggestion, any more than a murderer can withdraw the dagger without drawing blood. Abel is dead and we cannot bring him to life again.

And so the blood of Abel stands for irrevocable sin. It stands for the wrong we have done that we can never undo, for the sorrow, the pain, the grief we have caused in innocent hearts, that we never can alleviate. Even though he die with forgiveness and sorrow in his heart Abel's blood can do nothing for poor, stricken Cain. It cannot give him rest. It is helpless, powerless to do more than be to him a voice of accusation, of condemnation, following, following 'down the nights and down the days and down the labyrinthine ways of his own mind.' No matter how often Cain sits down to reflect upon the old days, he cannot forget how they ended. No matter how he prospers in business and is surrounded by the singing voices of his children, beneath them all sounds this cry of the blood of Abel.

Yes, and that weird, accusing cry sounds in all our hearts, until it is at last drowned by the mightier cry of the blood of Another. This is 'the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things

than that of Abel.' It is the blood of 'the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.' The great cry that goes up from the Cross, 'It is finished,' silences all these other cries. There are those two cries sounding through human history, the cry of the blood of Abel and the cry of the blood of Christ. One is that of accusing blood, the other that of atoning blood. The blood of Abel brings fear and desolation. The blood of Christ brings liberation and joy. The blood of Abel speaks, as our experience testifies, of the separating power of sin, driving us into loneliness, as it drove Cain and Jacob and Peter and many another. The blood of Christ speaks of the Love that redeems and reconciles, that brings us into the City of the living God, and to the glorious company of the apostles, and the goodly fellowship of the prophets and the noble army of martyrs and the holy Church of God throughout all the world. What a gateway this blood of Christ is to Paradise Regained! Verily it 'speaketh better things than that of Abel.' The cry of this blood sets going in our hearts the song of the redeemed, that drowns every other cry, every accusing voice. The cry of the blood of Christ calls the wanderer home: 'Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' It calls to us fugitives from our accusing sin, fleeing from the blood of some Abel, having no hope and without God in the world—'But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. . . . Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are . . . builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.'

Recent Foreign Theology.

Ignis Divinus. The Swedish scholar, C. M. Edsman, whose earlier work has been noted in these columns, has produced another work, marked by the same wide learning, and bearing the title *Ignis Divinus*.[1] It consists largely of stories, legends, and myths gathered from a wide field and bearing on the idea of rejuvenation through fire, either through roasting in an oven or through hammering on the blacksmith's anvil or through burning on the pyre. The book is professedly directed in part against the British 'Myth and Ritual' School, and against what the writer calls 'its Swedish appendage at Uppsala,' and in particular against the view of the British School that myth should be thought of as a ritual text composed to accompany ritual acts, and the Swedish School's view of the dying and rising god. At the same time Dr. Edsman prudently refrains from condemning the ritual view as wholly false. To the reviewer, who is not himself a member of the 'Myth and Ritual' School, though he has learned much from it, it is not clear how far the views of that School are menaced by this work. For it is not the contention of the 'Myth and Ritual' School that all myth was associated with ritual. The value of Dr. Edsman's book appears to lie more in its collection of folkloristic material from many lands over a wide range of time dealing with related themes than in any polemic purpose which, to be fair, is but slightly apparent in the work, though openly professed by the author.

[1] *Ignis Divinus: Le feu comme moyen de rajeunissement et d'immortalité: contes, légendes, mythes et rites* [1949]. (Publications of the New Society of Letters at Lund, No. 34.) Gleerup, Lund; Kr. 13.00.

A Jewish Rationalist. An American Jewish scholar has written a short study of the Jewish rationalist, Ḥiwi al-Balkhi, who flourished in Balkh, in Persia, in the second half of the ninth century,[2] and who wrote a book attacking the Bible and its God by propounding two hundred questions or criticisms. The purpose of the present study is to trace the origin of Ḥiwi's criticisms and to show that he was largely reflecting views which had earlier been advanced in non-Jewish quarters, and particularly by a Zoroastrian scholar, by Islamic rationalists, and by Gnostic heretics. It is interesting to see how many of the alleged difficulties are still doing duty in modern circles, and even more so to observe that rationalism in all these cases was unable to criticize itself and to discover that what it was really attacking was not God or the Bible, but an untenable view about the Bible. The study is of value as showing how imitative and how shallow rationalism can be, reflecting ideas which are not its own, and failing to achieve a positive evaluation of the materials it handles.

Czech Studies on the Old Testament. Professor Miloš Bič, who spent five years in German concentration camps and was released from Dachau by

[2] J. Rosenthal, *Ḥiwi al-Balkhi: a Comparative Study* [1949]. Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, Philadelphia.

the Americans, and who is now a Professor in the Theological Faculty of Prague, has published two substantial volumes of a work which is planned to run to a third. The general title is *Palestine from Prehistoric Times to the Christian Era*, and these volumes deal with *The Land and the People* and *The Cult and the Religion*.[1] The volumes are written in Czech and it is claimed that it is the first time that work on this scale has been published in that language. Fortunately there is a brief résumé in French at the end of each volume, or the work would be effectually sealed from the present writer and from most of the readers of The Expository Times. The extensive Bibliographies with which the volumes are provided show that they rest on wide scholarly reading, and there are many pages of plates at the end of each volume. The first deals with the geography of Palestine and with its earliest population, as well as with the Israelite peoples and their relations with their predecessors; while the second deals with the culture of the Ancient Near East as the background of the culture and religion of Israel, and with the religion and theology of the Old Testament. The general point of view of the author is that the Israelite federation was fundamentally religious, and that the Old Testament is a religious book which can only be rightly understood when it is seen from this angle. It is interesting to learn that scholarly Biblical work on this scale is being done in Czechoslovakia.

A series of monographs under the title *Old Testament Studies* is also being issued in Czech, and the first of them, again from the pen of Professor Bič, has been issued. This is part of a doctoral dissertation which he prepared some years ago on *Traces of Haruspicy in the Old Testament*.[2] Happily there is again a summary, this time in English. The author's thesis is that the word בֹּקֶר, which is usually translated *morning*, originally meant *haruspicy*, and then came to mean *morning* because haruspicy usually took place in the early morning. He then examines some passages where he believes this meaning was original. Similarly he holds that נֹקֵד (Am 1[1]) is a cultic term, related in content (cf. בּוֹקֵר Am 7[14]), perhaps denoting hepatoscopy, and that Amos was therefore a cultic person. The latter view has been advanced by others, but so far as the reviewer is aware this is the first time that traces of divination have been associated with the term בֹּקֶר. It is a pity the full discussion is not in an accessible language, so that the argument could be more closely followed; but the reviewer feels that the cultic interpretation of the Old Testament is being overpressed. Especially is this so when מִשְׁתֶּה בְּקִיר (1 K 14[10]+) is held to mean 'those who were feasting at a haruspicy.' Hence general agreement with the author's insistence on the religious character of the Old Testament does not carry with it the acceptance of all the examples which are presented.

The Call of Isaiah. The energetic Professor Ivan Engnell, of Uppsala, who is no stranger to readers of these notes and whose unorthodox views on the Old Testament have aroused widespread interest both within and without Scandinavia, has published a study of 'The Call of Isaiah,'[3] whose preface declares it to be 'a contribution to the indispensable settling of accounts with literary criticism.' Here we are offered a textual study of Is 6 in the light of the Hebrew, Septuagint and Syriac texts (all of which are printed in full), in which the Hebrew text is defended, and especially in respect of the closing words, which many excise. The importance of this lies in the fact that their retention brings the first intimation of the characteristic doctrine of the Remnant into the experience of Isaiah's call. Here the reviewer, who is a literary critic, is in full agreement, as also was Budde—a very redoubtable literary critic. It is not therefore clear how literary criticism is dealt a severe blow by the emphatic defence of positions which some literary critics have adopted, even though more have taken the other view. Engnell finds evidence of a cultic background to the chapter, and maintains that the prophet's call took place at the New Year Festival, when the king represented the deity in the ritual. In this he is probably right in the main, though our knowledge of the details of the pre-exilic New Year Festival is less certain than we could wish.

In an Additional Note the author replies to criticisms of himself in the writings of other Scandinavian writers and makes some brief comments on Kahle's *The Cairo Geniza*. In the former connexion he protests that he is not nearly so extreme in his views as he has been represented. He emphasizes that he does not regard oral tradition as the only source for the compilation of the books of the Old Testament, and that within the prophetical books he finds much less orally transmitted material than some others. Here the recognition

[1] *Palestina od Pravěku ke Křesťanství: I. Země a lid* [1948]; *II. Kult a náboženství* [1949]. Husova Československá Evangelická Fakulta Bohoslovecká, Prague.

[2] *Starozákonne Studie: I. Stopy po Drobopravectví v Jisráeli* [1947]. Nákladem Spolku Posluchačů Husovy Fakulty v Praze, Prosinec.

[3] *The Call of Isaiah: An Exegetical and Comparative Study* (Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift [1949], iv.) [1949]. Lundequistska, Uppsala, and Harrassowitz, Leipzig; Kr. 3.00.

that there were also literary sources implies that there is a place for literary criticism alongside the tradition criticism associated with Engnell's name. The remark in the Preface therefore should apparently be understood as a protest against one-sided and extreme literary criticism rather than against all literary criticism. The reviewer would agree that in the hands of some it has been carried to extremes, though he thinks we have more definite evidence of literary sources than of oral sources, whose existence, however, is probable. This Note is of importance for the understanding of Professor Engnell's positions, and will be particularly welcomed outside Scandinavia.[1]

H. H. Rowley.

Manchester University.

[1] A final Postscript is devoted to the new Palestinian MSS, and in particular the Isaiah scroll, and their bearing on the views of Kahle. It may be noted that Kahle himself has an article on these MSS in *Theologische Literaturzeitung* [1949], No. 2.

Entre Nous.

Public Worship.

The Public Worship of God is the reverent title of an arresting work, admirably produced by the Independent Press (8s. 6d. net) and written by Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin, for so long the distinguished head of the great Union Seminary in New York. It is a much needed book.

Some, say the Scriptures, are called to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers. But in these days of ours something of all these differing offices is required of the minister of Jesus Christ, and many other aptitudes as well. And, in this multiplicity of duties thrust upon him, it is difficult for him to preserve his sense of proportion and to put first things first. To-day have we not urgent need of Paul's petition that 'a sense of what is vital,' so Moffatt translated it, may be given us. Well, here is a book that should bring us back to the essentials and fill us with a new enthusiasm for them.

Dr. Coffin is a fitting man to write it. Into this volume he has packed a large experience, much learning and an enviable width of reading, and, best of all, not a little of his own fascinating personality and eager faith.

All which has resulted in a book which makes those of us who have been a long time at it feel what amateurs we are in our own life work!

It opens with a fine little essay on what worship is. High ground is taken. 'We worship for sheer delight. It is akin to the intense enjoyment given us by the countryside on a spring morning or the forest-clad hills gorgeous in the sunlight on an October day.'

To the question, Why go to church? he counters 'Why enjoy music? Why read poetry? Why find happiness in being with one's dearest? We worship for the sheer pleasure of it.'

This breath from the heights blows through the whole book. Yet it condescends on a detailed examination of each and every part of the service in the House of God. Not easily can one find wiser studies on the composition of prayers; on the offering of praise; on worship through the Word, preached and read; on the Sacraments—which last has really for its text that saying of Schleiermacher, 'I might almost say that if Christ had done nothing more than institute the Holy Communion, I should have loved Him to adoration.' The children, too, are given a place. Wesley once recorded, 'I spoke to the children, the most difficult part of our office.' Certainly many are pathetically futile at it; and they might find here a road leading them to better things. For, not precept only, but example is offered to us. Moreover, there is a catholic-minded chapter upon union, how in our services we lean upon others outside our own immediate communion.

Dr. Coffin has a telling pen. There are many pertinent and striking passages such as 'Too much has been made of the Christian life as an effort, and too little has been made of it as God's presence and activity in us. There are many in our Churches who might well be asked, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" and who might reply, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." They have been baptized into the current equivalent of John's baptism—an earnest endeavour to be better men and women and help toward a better world. But they are unaware of their resources in God, ready and able to work in them and achieve through them more than they ask or think.'

Many down the years have told me wistfully that they covet a refresher course some six years after their ordination, when, they say, they have learned enough to be ready for many things which in their college days they either did not believe, or pushed aside as unimportant.

This book might well give them the renewed inspiration which they need. A. J. Gossip.

Frances Bellerby.

There are so many things which can be included under the name of poetry. There is the sheer sensuous delight in sound in Swinburne. There is the delight in sound plus a tendency to preach in Tennyson. There is that kind of deliberate awkwardness that is in so much of Browning. There is that taut economy characteristic of T. S. Eliot. There is the crystal clarity of a writer like Wordsworth and the deliberate unintelligibility of the moderns. And yet they are all poetry. But there is something almost unique in Frances Bellerby's new volume of poems—*The Brightening Cloud and Other Poems* (Peter Davies ; 7s. 6d. net). There is in these poems a certain cameo-like quality. They are like engravings on gems. In the most unusual way they combine a sheer love of beauty in sound with an economy of expression which is classical in its quality.

Frances Bellerby can write with consummate beauty as when she writes of

> Mine that fraught, passionate stillness
> embodying prayer ;

or,

> Now the sun has hounded death from all
> the land.

She can get right down to the essence of things as in the poem entitled, ' Prayer for the Children.'

> ' Happiness ' ;
> No thought of that perilous word
> Shall endanger my prayer for the children.
> I will ask but one blessing—
> Not refuge, cherishing,
> Lover, friend, applause of men,
> Rainbow hope, hope-free renunciation ;
> Only—compassion.
> *Now and forever grant them compassion, Lord !*
>
> . . . . .
>
> Dare I then utter this word ?
> Knowing what must happen,
> Ask *this* for the children ?—
> That the self shall never be held
> Fast in its own small home
> But, when ears listen, eyes behold,
> Freely shall go and come.
> *Now and forever grant them compassion, Lord !*

That is at once great in thought and great in expression.

Like all true poets Frances Bellerby is not a poet of the ivory tower but one who sees, feels intensely and judges the human situation. She has a poem entitled ' Unholy Communion ' which is terrible because it is true.

> Man's definite needs in this progressive age
> Are central heat, electricity and drainage.
>
> . . . . .
>
> Today, no ecstasy of resurrection ;
> Today, no art that isn't self-expression ;
> Today, the sweetest of all sweet phrases—
> ' The good things of this world,' and ' on a cash
> basis.'
> So rest passive, Modern Man ; in passivity
> Flowers enjoyment, and a fine false safety.
> Yes, intellect sleeping, soul dying, the glamorous
> senses of Man
> Can truly come into their own !
> Today acclaim from the housetops this bold
> nation-wide slogan ;
> Now and forever, by BREAD, by BREAD ALONE !
>
> Take, eat, O Modern Consumer, in remembrance
> of nothing at all.
> The end of every sensible man is his own nice
> funeral.

There is bitterness there, but it is not the cynic's bitterness, but the heart's bitterness of the lover who sees his loved one selling life for ashes and dust.

Frances Bellerby is a considerable poet. This is not smooth saccharine poetry. It is always compressed, often difficult but always rewarding. We have already said that these short poems are like engravings on jewels but they have in them a kind of contained intensity which makes them great poetry. Let us quote but one more which has this epigrammatic intensity of language and feeling. It is entitled ' Court of Justice.'

> How devastatingly incongruous
> With this conscious, formulated place
> Would be the innocent holy chaos
> Of some child's incalculable face !
>
> Therefore my lord the Judge, being wise,
> Looks not too closely in the prisoner's eyes
> Lest—deep, forgotten, in half-dark—
> A child should lurk.

There is a delicate fastidiousness about these poems which makes it certain that Frances Bellerby's output will never be large in size but it will always be supreme in quality.

WILLIAM BARCLAY.

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